



3 1761 04203 4348

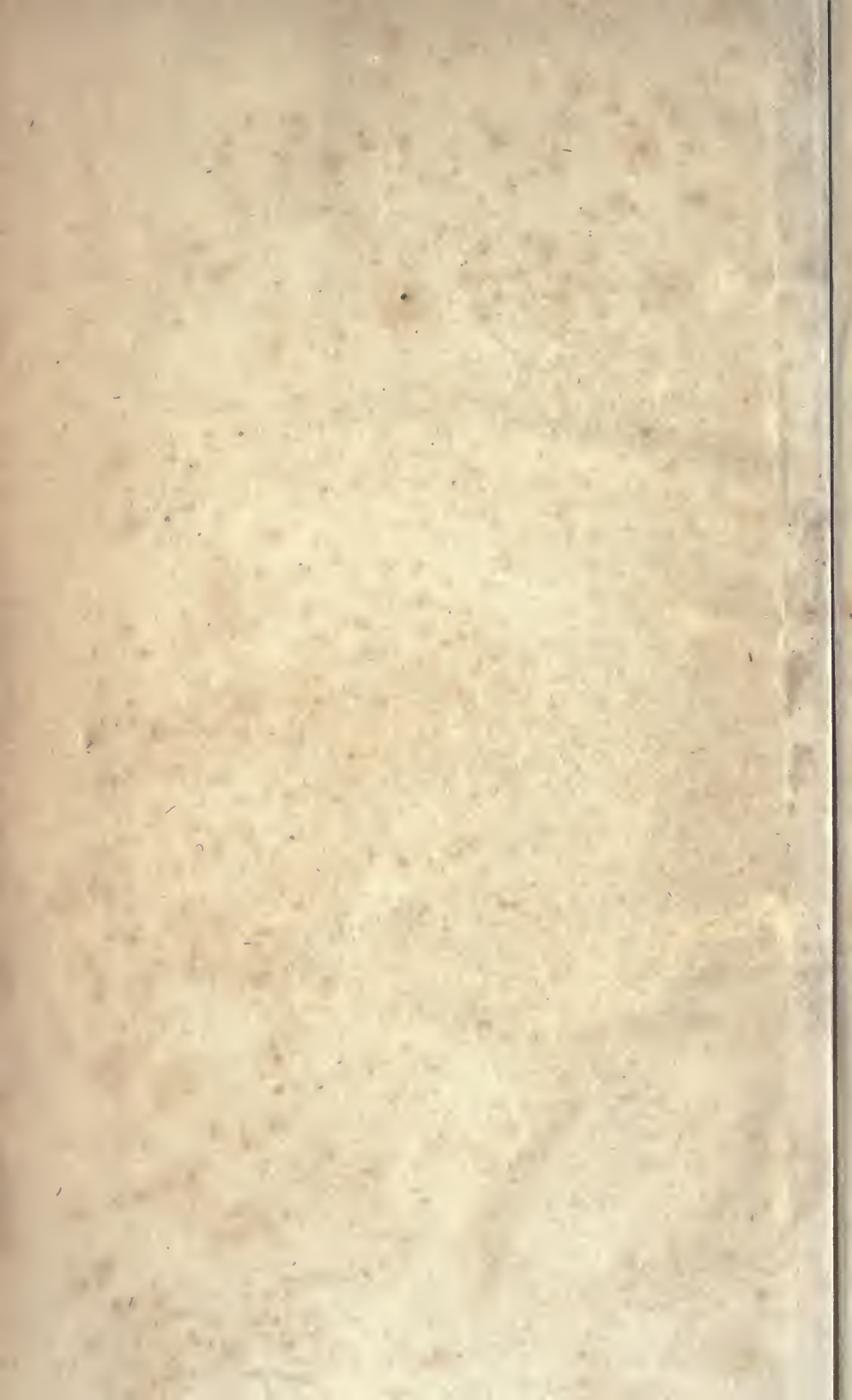
60

Re-

James Howard

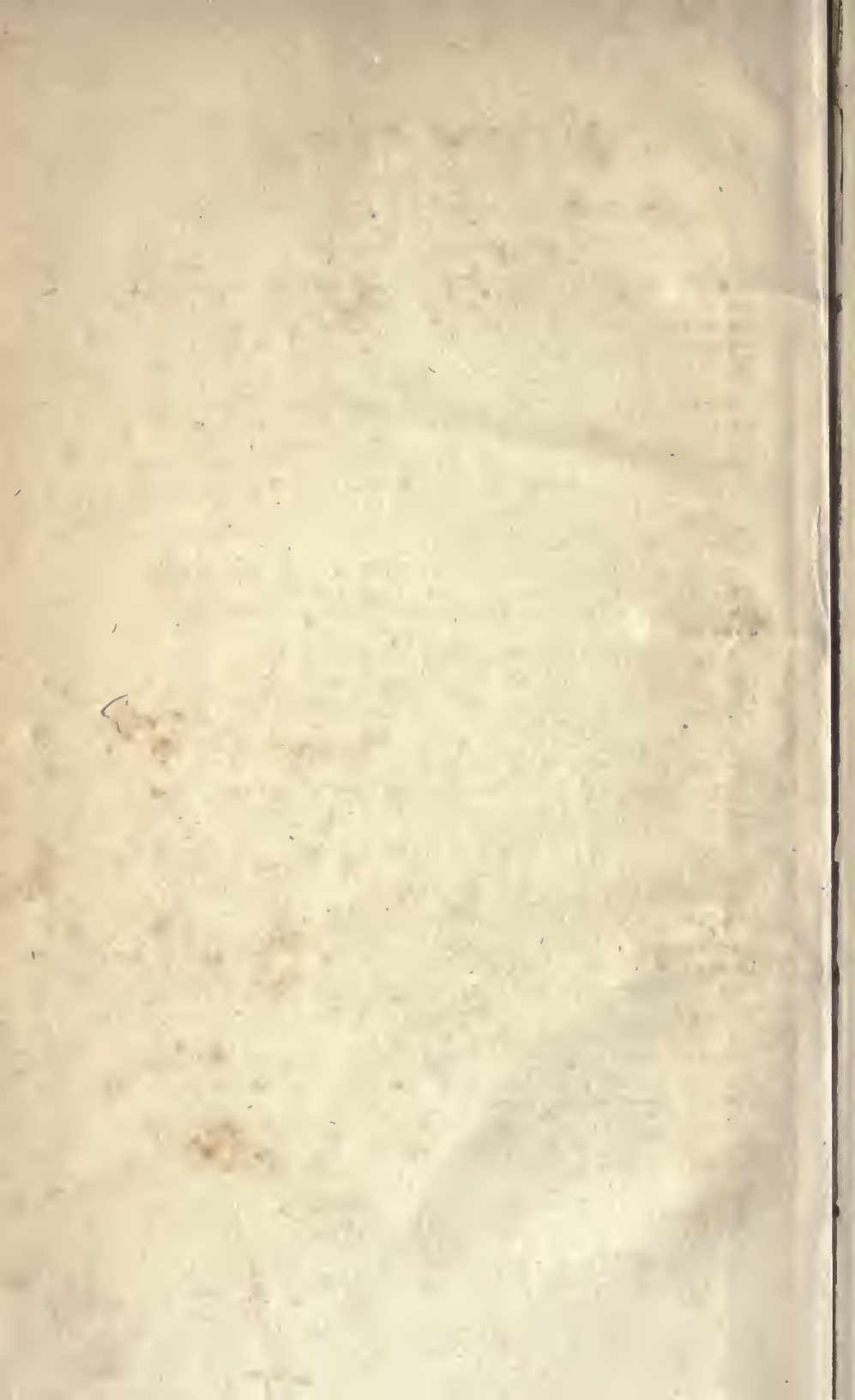


~~Dea~~



ne R  
97





## VALUABLE WORKS

PUBLISHED BY

J. & J. HARPER, No. 82 CLIFF-STREET, NEW-YORK.

---

**A DICTIONARY OF THE HOLY BIBLE**; containing an Historical and Geographical Account of the Persons and Places; a literal, critical, and systematical Description of other Objects, whether natural, artificial, civil, religious, or military; and an Explanation of the Appellative Terms mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. By the Rev. JOHN BROWN. From the last Edinburgh Edition. To which is prefixed a Biographical Sketch of the Author, &c.

**EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION**, derived from the literal Fulfilment of PROPHECY; particularly illustrated by the History of the Jews, and by the Discoveries of recent Travellers. By the Rev. ALEXANDER KEITH. 12mo. From the sixth Edinburgh Edition.

**SERMONS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.** By the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M.A., sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. From the last London Edition. Containing a number of Sermons never before published in this Country. 3 vols. 8vo.

**THE MISCELLANEOUS WORKS OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.** Containing a Plain Account of Christian Perfection; the Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion; Principles of the Methodists; Letters, &c. In 3 vols. 8vo.

**THE WORKS OF THE REV. ROBERT HALL.** Complete. With a brief Memoir and a Sketch of his literary Character, by the Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh, LL.D., M.P. And a Sketch of his Character as a Theologian and a Preacher, by the Rev. John Foster. In 3 vols. 8vo.

**A CONCORDANCE to the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.** By the Rev. JOHN BROWN, of Haddington. 32mo.

**PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTIANITY**, and of the Missionary Establishments for its Propagation in all Parts of the World. Edited by FREDERIC SHOBERL. 12mo.

**THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.** From the earliest Period to the present Time. By Rev. H. H. MILMAN. In 3 vols. 18mo. [With Maps and Woodcuts.]

**THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED**, Founder of the Religion of Islam, and of the Empire of the Saracens. By the Rev. GEORGE BUSH, A.M. [With a Plan of the Temple of Mecca.] 18mo.

**THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.** By the Rev. G. R. GLEIG, M.A., M.R.S.D., &c. &c. In 2 vols. 18mo. [With Maps of Palestine and the Travels of St. Paul.]

**VIEW OF ANCIENT AND MODERN EGYPT**; with an Outline of its Natural History. By Rev. M. RUSSELL, LL.D. With Engravings. 18mo.

**PALESTINE; or, THE HOLY LAND.** From the earliest Period to the present Time. By Rev. M. RUSSELL, LL.D. 18mo. [With a Map and wood Engravings.]

**THE BOOK OF NATURE.** By JOHN MASON GOOD, M.D., F.R.S., F.R.S.L., Mem. Am. Phil. Soc. and F.R.S. of Philadelphia. From the last London Edition. To which is now prefixed, *A Sketch of the Author's Life.* 8vo.

**THE LIFE OF SIR ISAAC NEWTON.** By DAVID BREWSTER, LL.D. With a Portrait. 18mo.

**THE HISTORY OF CHIVALRY AND THE CRUSADES.** By G. P. R. JAMES, Esq. 18mo. [With a Plate.]

**THE NATURAL HISTORY OF INSECTS.** [With numerous Woodcuts.] 18mo.

**ENGLISH SYNONYMES,** with copious Illustrations and Explanations, drawn from the best Writers. A new Edition, enlarged. By GEORGE CRABB, M.A. Author of the Universal Technological Dictionary, and the Universal Historical Dictionary. 8vo.

**LETTERS FROM THE ÆGEAN.** By JAMES EMERSON, Esq. 8vo.

**DOMESTIC DUTIES ;** or, Instructions to Young Married Ladies, on the Management of their Households, and the Regulation of their Conduct in the various Relations and Duties of Married Life. By Mrs. WILLIAM PARKES. [Third Edition.] 12mo.

**THE HISTORICAL WORKS OF THE REV. WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.** Complete Edition. Including his History of AMERICA ; CHARLES V. ; SCOTLAND, INDIA, &c. In 3 vols. 8vo. [With Plates, &c.]

**FAMILY LIBRARY.** Of this work, which is intended to combine the two objects of instruction and amusement, comprising as much entertaining matter as can be given along with useful knowledge, several volumes are already published.

**THE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE ;** with a View of the Progress of Society from the Rise of the modern Kingdoms to the Peace of Paris, in 1763. By WILLIAM RUSSELL, LL.D. And a Continuation of the History to the present Time. By WILLIAM JONES, Esq. With Annotations by an American. In 3 vols. 8vo. [With Portraits.]

**THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.** By EDWARD GIBBON, Esq. Fifth American from the last London Edition. In 4 vols. 8vo. [With a Portrait of the Author, and Maps.]

**LETTERS ON DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT.** Addressed to J. G. LOCKHART, Esq. By Sir WALTER SCOTT, Bart. [With a copperplate Engraving.] 18mo.

**XENOPHON.** The ANABASIS, translated by EDWARD SPELMAN, Esq. The CYROPÆDIA, translated by the Hon. ASHLEY COOPER. In 2 vols. 18mo. [Portrait.]

**SALLUST.** Translated by WM. ROSE, M.A. With Improvements and Notes. [Portrait.] 18mo.

**THE ORATIONS OF DEMOSTHENES.** Translated by THOMAS LELAND, D.D. In 2 vols. 18mo. [Portrait.]



IE  
T2436r

# RECORDS OF MY LIFE.

BY THE LATE  
JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ., [1757-1832]

AUTHOR OF  
"MONSIEUR TONSON."

---

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

---

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. & J. HARPER,  
No. 82 CLIFF-STREET,  
AND SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS GENERALLY THROUGHOUT THE  
UNITED STATES.

---

1833.

THE BOOK OF NATURE. By JOHN  
M.D., F.R.S., F.R.S.I., Mem. Am. Phil. Soc. and F.R.  
the last London Edition. To which is  
Life. 8vo.

PR

5549

T3Z52

1833

## CONTENTS.

---

### CHAPTER I.

THE Chevalier Taylor—The Author's Parents—Jessé Foot and his Uncle  
—Derrick the Poet and Mrs. Lessingham, &c. - PAGE 13

### CHAPTER II.

The Author's early History—Anecdote of his Grandfather, the Chevalier  
Taylor—Baron de Wenzel—Imposition of Henry Jones—Account of  
him, &c. - 18

### CHAPTER III.

The Author's own Family—James Taylor, A.M.—Philip Riley Taylor  
—The Author's Father—Cheselden's connexion with the Author's  
Father—The Author appointed Oculist to the Prince of Wales—Wil-  
liam Oldys, Esq. &c. - 22

### CHAPTER IV.

Mr. James Brooke—Mrs. Pritchard, the Actress—Mrs. Brooke, &c. 29

### CHAPTER V.

Mr. Pratt—Mr. Sayers—Miss Seward—Mrs. Angelica Kauffman, &c. 33

### CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Henry Griffith—Reddish, the Actor—William Donaldson, Esq.—  
Lucy Cooper and Richardson—Miss Graham—Miss Faulkener, after-  
ward Mrs. Graham—Mr. Peter Bardin—Sir Henry Moore—Constantia  
Phillips—Maclaine, the Highwayman—Mr. Owen Ruffhead—An ex-  
traordinary Story—Another extraordinary Story, &c. - 38

### CHAPTER VII.

Dr. Monsey—Sir Benjamin Wrench—Sir Robert Walpole—Lord Towns-  
hend—The Duke of Marlborough—The Duchess—The Earl of Godol-  
phin—Lord Walsingham—Dr. Monsey and Mrs. Garrick—Dr. Wolcot,  
Mrs. Billington and Curran—Dr. Warburton and Quin—Character of  
Warburton—Mr. Boswell, junior—Dr. Monsey's Daughter—Mrs. Mon-  
tagne—Conyers Middleton and "Old Chubb," &c. - 49



## CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Hugh Kelly—Mrs. Dancer, the Actress—Sir Henry Bate Dudley— Mr. Richardson's Challenge to him—Mr. Brereton, the Irish Duel- list, &c.	- - - - - 63
--	--------------

## CHAPTER IX.

Dr. Oliver Goldsmith—John Wilkes, &c.	- - - - - 68
---------------------------------------	--------------

## CHAPTER X.

The Earl of Chatham—The Abbé Sechard—Lady Wallace—Mr. Fox and the Whigs—Mr. Burke, &c.	- - - - - 73
---	--------------

## CHAPTER XI.

Francis North, Earl of Guildford—Mr. John Kemble—Miss Phillips— Mr. Kemble and Dr. Charles Burney—Mr. Kemble and the Hon. Mr. St. John—Tickel and Sheridan, &c.	- - - - - 79
---	--------------

## CHAPTER XII.

Rev. William Peters—His acquaintance and quarrel with Mr. William Gifford—Mr. John Horne Tooke, &c.	- - - - - 89
--	--------------

## CHAPTER XIII.

Edward Jerningham, Esq., &c.	- - - - - 96
------------------------------	--------------

## CHAPTER XIV.

Charles Townley, Esq.—Miss Pond—Mr. O'Brien, the Actor—Mr. Bat- tishill—Dr. Shebbeare—Mr. Tetherington—Coan, the Dwarf—Lady W—— and Colonel Bloomfield—Mr. Pitt and the Duchess of Gordon —Dignum—Dr. Johnson—Buckhorse, &c.	- - - - - 104
---	---------------

## CHAPTER XV.

Thomson the Poet—His Wife—Mr. George Chalmers—Hugh Boyd and his Daughter—Mr. Gerard Hamilton and the Duke of Richmond, &c.	- - - - - 110
--	---------------

## CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. Arthur Murphy—Mr. Jessé Foot and Mr. Fazakerly—Miss Elliot— Mrs. Jordan, &c.	- - - - - 114
---	---------------

## CHAPTER XVII.

Mrs. Macaulay—Dr. Graham—Dr. Birch—Lord Chesterfield and the Duchess of Marlborough—Jack Spencer, &c.	- - - - - 123
--	---------------

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. James Boswell—Mr. Windbam and Dr. Johnson—Sir Alexander Boswell—Mr. James Boswell, junior—Dr. Glover—Mrs. Kelly—Mr. Akerman—Mr. Stephen Kemble—Mr. Davenport, &c. - 126

## CHAPTER XIX.

Rev. Thomas Maurice—Dr. Parr—Dr. Johnson—Thomas Tyers—William Taylor, Esq.—Professor Porson—Mr. James Perry, &c. - 133

## CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Samuel Ireland—Shakspeare's MS. Play of "Vortigern and Rowena"—Mr. John Ireland—Hewardine—Cervetto—Jervas, the Painter, &c. - 141

## CHAPTER XXI.

Ozias Humphrey, R.A.—Mr. Caleb Whitefoord—Colley Cibber, &c. 148

## CHAPTER XXII.

Mrs. Cornelys—Miss Cornelys—Miss Williams, &c. - 153

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Haydn, the Composer—Anthony Pasquin—Mrs. Abington—Mr. West, Pres. R.A.—Mr. Jay, the American Minister, &c. - 158

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Walking Stewart, &c. - 163

## CHAPTER XXV.

Mr. John Opie, R.A.—Dr. Wolcot—Fuseli—Mrs. Opie—Mr. Northcote, &c. - 169

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Mr. Richard Owen Cambridge—Mr. James Cobb—Mr. Prince Hoare—Major Grose—Mr. Henry James Pye—Mr. Barford—Lord Darnley and Mrs. Woffington—Garrick and Berenger—Garrick and Barry, &c. 176

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Capability Brown—Sir Charles Barnfield—Mr. John Kemble—Handel and Dean Swift—Dr. Morell and Handel—Reverse of Fortune—Mrs. Batiman—Chevalier D'Eon—General Paoli, &c. - 187

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Garrick and Dr. Monsey—Mrs. Clive—Garrick, &c. - - 194

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Barry, the Actor—Mrs. Crawford, afterward Mrs. Barry—Mr. and Mrs. Yates—Hurst—Hallam—Mr. and Mrs. Ross, &c. - - 199

## CHAPTER XXX.

Shuter—Hipsley and Mrs. Green—Tom Lowe—Peter Bardin, &c. 207

## CHAPTER XXXI.

John Henderson—Mr. T. Sheridan—Tom Davies—Mr. Becket, the Bookseller—"The Pursuits of Literature"—Rowley and Chatterton—Mr. William Boscawen—Mr. W. T. Fitz Gerald—Mr. H. J. Pye—Tom King—Miss Baker—Doctor Hoadley, M.D. &c. - - 212

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Mrs. Inchbald—Mr. Justice Hardinge, &c. - - - 223

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

Mrs. Abington—Miss Farren, &c. - - - 230

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

Holman and "The Glorious Eight"—Quick—Terry—Emery—Bensley, &c. - - - 235

## CHAPTER XXXV.

Lewis, a Provincial Actor—Dagger Marr—Garrick and Dr. Monsey—Parsons—Edwin—Moody, &c. - - - 242

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Charles Macklin, &c. - - - 247

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Mr. Thomas Sheridan—Tom King—Woodward—William Lewis—Bibb, the Engraver, &c. - - - 255

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Tom Davies—Mr. George Steevens—John Palmer, &c. - - 264



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

Mr. John Kemble—Mr. and Mrs. Hull—Gentleman Smith, &c. - 269

## CHAPTER XL.

King Gibson—Ridout—Mr. Walker—Quin—Mr. Ince—Mrs. Clive,  
&c. - 280

## CHAPTER XLI.

Mrs. Siddons—Mr. Waldron—Admiral Schank—Suett—John Kemble—  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kemble—Dodd, &c. - 286

## CHAPTER XLII.

Madame Mara—Mrs. Billington—John Johnstone—Mr. O'Keeffe—Mrs.  
Daly, &c. - 294

## CHAPTER XLIII.

Michael Kelly—Mrs. Crouch—John Kemble—Bannister—Mr. Sheridan  
—Mr. Richardson—Mrs. Horrebow, &c. - 302

## CHAPTER XLIV.

George Cooke—Miss Dunwell—Mrs. Cooke—Usher—John Palmer—  
Kean—Henry and George Saville Carey—Barrymore, &c. - 310

## CHAPTER XLV.

Bensley—Charles Bannister—Robert Palmer—Quick—Mrs. Bembridge  
—Anecdote of Shakspeare—Anecdote of Cromwell—Mr. Malone's  
Opinion of it—Queen Elizabeth and Shakspeare, &c. - 318

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Mr. Richard Cumberland—*Con.* Jackson—Mr. Richardson—Mr. Sheri-  
dan, and Mr. Shaw the Musician, &c. - 327

## CHAPTER XLVII.

Mr. Sheridan—His Illness and Death, &c. - 336

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

Barber the Watchmaker, and Dr. Monsey—Mr. Windham—Sir Joseph  
Mawbey—Sir George Howard—Mr. Burke—Junius's Letters, &c. 340

## CHAPTER XLIX.

Voltaire—Charles XII. of Sweden—Francis Newbery, Esq.—Andrew  
Bain, M.D.—Mr. Christie, &c. - 347

## CHAPTER L.

Sir Home Popham—Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson—Mr. Franks—Mr. John Reeves—Mr. John Bowles—Mr. William Shield—Monk Lewis—Colonel Frederick, &c.	- - - - -	353
---	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LI.

Dr. Wolcot, &c.	- - - - -	362
-----------------	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LII.

Mr. William Woodfall—Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall—Mr. George Woodfall, son of preceding—Junius's Letters, &c.	- - - - -	371
---	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LIII.

Mr. Sheridan—The Author appointed Editor of "The Morning Post"—Mr. Merry—Mr. John Gifford, &c.	- - - - -	380
--	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LIV.

Lord-chancellor Yorke—Bishop of Peterborough—William Wordsworth, Esq., &c.	- - - - -	390
--	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LV.

Rev. Charles Este—Mr. Topham—Mr. Peter Andrews—Jacobin James—Rev. John Warner, &c.	- - - - -	394
--	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LVI.

John Nicholls, Esq.—Mr. Matthews—William Clay, Esq.—Singular Event in Hyde Park, &c.	- - - - -	404
--	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LVII.

Rev. William Jackson—Mr. and Mrs. Mills—Mrs. Ferguson, &c.	- - - - -	410
--	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LVIII.

George Chalmers, Esq.—Alexander Chalmers, Esq., &c.	- - - - -	418
---	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LIX.

Jew King—Lady Lanesborough—Lord Falkland—Mrs. Grattan—Jackson of Exeter—Mr. Davy, &c.	- - - - -	422
---	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LX.

Lord Byron, &c.	- - - - -	426
-----------------	-----------	-----

## CHAPTER LXI.

The Earl of Eldon—The Earl of Coventry—Samuel Foote, &c. - 431

## CHAPTER LXII.

William Cooke, Esq.—Rev Dr. Symmons, &c. - - - 435

## CHAPTER LXIII.

Dr. Arnold—Sir John and Miss Oldmixon—William Gifford, Esq.,  
&c. - - - - - 439

## CHAPTER LXIV.

Dr. Burnet, Bishop of Cloyne—George Colman the Younger—Thomas  
Harris, Esq., &c. - - - - - 442

## CHAPTER LXV.

Joseph Planta, Esq.—Rev. Henry Stephens—Sir Thomas Lawrence,  
&c. - - - - - 446

## CHAPTER LXVI.

Mr. James Hook—His sons James and Theodore—W. T. Fitzgerald,  
Esq.—Rev. David Williams—Mr. Boscawen, &c. - - - 450

## CHAPTER LXVII.

John Crowder, Esq.—Dr. William Thomson—Bevy Pearce—Dr. Hill—  
Mrs. Hill, &c. - - - - - 456

CONTENTS

THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART I.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1630 TO 1639. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART II.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1640 TO 1689. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART III.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1690 TO 1739. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART IV.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1740 TO 1789. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART V.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1790 TO 1839. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART VI.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1840 TO 1889. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART VII.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1890 TO 1939. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART VIII.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1940 TO 1989. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART IX.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 1990 TO 2039. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART X.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 2040 TO 2089. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

PART XI.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM 2090 TO 2139. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.



# RECORDS OF MY LIFE.

---

## CHAPTER I.

When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not  
Think I should live 'till I were married.

BENEDICT.

THIS passage from our unrivalled bard is applicable to myself with reference to the purpose of the present work, as well as to my matrimonial engagements. As early as I can remember, I saw, or thought I saw, so much infelicity in the marriage state, that I conceived a degree of horror against wedlock. It may appear strange, but I actually trace the origin of my aversion to matrimony even so far back as when I was only seven years of age.

I was at that period of life with my dear departed mother, at Lynn, in Norfolk, accompanying my grandfather, the Chevalier Taylor, on his revisiting his native country. She took me to the playhouse, which was then open in that town. The play, as I was afterwards informed, was "The Jealous Wife." I now well remember that the violent temper of Mrs. Oakley, and the patient efforts of her husband to remove her jealousy, made such an impression upon my mind, as excited the disgust which I have mentioned, and which could only be subdued by the merits of the two amiable partners to whom I have since been united. The afterpiece was "Hob in the Well," and when Hob's parents came in search of him, and expressed great anxiety to find him, I started from my seat in the pit and exclaimed, "He is in the well!" The audience, I understood, enjoyed a hearty laugh at my innocence and simplicity.

As therefore, notwithstanding my aversion to wedlock, I have been twice married, I may truly say, that I had equal repugnance to the idea of obtruding any circumstance of my humble life upon the world at large. The pecuniary shock, however, which I suffered from the perfidy of a deceased partner in the Sun newspaper, and the advice of friends, who think too favourably of me, have induced me to take up the egotistical pen. Here, perhaps, some satirical critic will quote Pope, and hint, "Obliged by hunger and request of friends." Well, I shall answer in the words of my old friend Sheridan, "I can laugh at his malice though not at his wit." I received besides an intimation

from an eminent publisher, that he would be glad if I would engage in such a work as the present.

Never conceiving it possible that I should adopt such a measure, I had made no kind of preparation, and must resort to my memory for such facts as may present themselves, without the regularity of dates, contenting myself with rigid accuracy in my recitals of what has fallen within my own notice, or what I have derived from others on whose veracity I could depend. Dates, indeed, can be of no importance in such matters as I have to relate. I have therefore no occasion to regret that I have not followed the example of those who record the events of every day, lest, in the vicissitudes of life, they should be involved in circumstances for which they might be unable to account, and consequently be exposed to perplexing contingencies, or to the misrepresentations of malice.

"The little hero of his tale" may reasonably be expected to mention his origin. I am the eldest son of Mr. John Taylor, who for many years practised the profession of an oculist with the highest reputation, and a character universally respected in private life for integrity: he was also admired for his wit and humour. My father was the only son of the celebrated Chevalier Taylor, who was a pupil of the famous Mr. Cheselden. My grandfather, however, relinquished the general profession of a surgeon, and confined himself wholly to that of an oculist. He was appointed oculist to King George the Second, and afterward to every crowned head in Europe.

I was born in a house which my father occupied at Highgate. He had another at the same time in Hatton Garden. His household, as I afterward understood, consisted of two female servants and one foot-boy. He married early in life the daughter of a respectable tradesman, but as he was not sufficiently established in his profession to bear the probable expense of an increasing family, my maternal grandfather strongly opposed their union, and they were obliged to court in secrecy. Strange to say, the place which they chose for their courtship was Bedlam, where, at that time, to the disgrace of the metropolis, casual visitors were admitted for a penny each.

At length the respectable character of my father, and his attention to his profession, induced my grandfather to give his consent to the marriage. I was the first offspring of this union, and as it appeared in due time that my father's family was likely to increase, Mr. Foot, the uncle of my late friend Jessé Foot, reflecting on the uncertain profession of an oculist, advised him to contract his establishment in the following terms: "Taylor, you begin where you should end." Finding the expense of a growing family increase in proportion, my mother adding to it every year, my father took his advice, discharged his foot-boy, disposed of his one-horse chaise, a common vehicle at that time, relinquished his cottage at Highgate, and finally settled wholly in Hatton-garden, where he resided till his death, in the year 1787. He had been educated at Paris, was a good French and Latin scholar, and was much admired for his quickness at repartee. All the rest of his children, amounting to eleven, were born in Hatton Garden. Five died



in infancy, but six were alive at his death, and now my sister and myself are the only survivors. The affection of my sister, together with her merits, both moral and intellectual, in a great degree compensate for the loss of the rest.

My father's first great patient was the Duke of Ancaster, who esteemed him as a companion, and had often invited him to pass the Christmas holidays at his seat in Lincolnshire. The duke had nearly succeeded in procuring for him the honour of being oculist to King George the Third, but the Duke of Bedford having had an operation for the cataract successfully performed by the Baron de Wenzel, obtained the appointment for the baron.

My second brother, who was a member of the College of Surgeons, and myself, on the death of the baron, were appointed to the situation by the late Earl of Salisbury, who was then lord chamberlain.

It may be observed, in reference to Mr. Foot, whom I have mentioned, that people may give good advice without being able to adopt it. He was a respectable apothecary in Hatton Garden, and according to report, had accumulated about twelve thousand pounds, but having ventured it in an unsuccessful speculation, he lost it all, and, as the phrase is, died broken-hearted. My late friend Jessé Foot, his nephew, had been apprenticed to him. The uncle was reserved and churlish; the nephew had then the same sturdy independent spirit which marked his character through life. When the uncle uttered any complaint, Jessé, who was a scholar, always answered him in Latin, and as the former was but little acquainted with that language, it always put an end to his complaints, and induced him to quit the field. Jessé, however, assured me that he should not have answered in this manner if his uncle had not complained rather to show his authority than to correct any errors.

All that I can recollect to have heard of what passed in my infancy, was, that my father was intimate with Derrick the poet, as he was then called, and that Derrick introduced a lady to my father and mother as his wife who, it afterward appeared was not so, and that then, so far as the lady was concerned, the connexion with my family ended.

This lady, many years after, appeared on the stage under the name of Mrs. Lessingham, and was a comic actress of merit, as well as a very pretty woman. She was an extraordinary character, and one of her whims was to assume man's attire and frequent the coffee-houses, after her separation from Derrick.

As Derrick wholly depended on his literary talents, he could not afford an expensive habitation, and therefore resided with Mrs. Lessingham, his nominal wife, in a floor two pair of stairs high, in Shoe-lane, Holborn. During their residence in this place, as the lady felt a strong propensity towards the stage, Derrick took great pains to prepare her for the theatrical profession. Her talents were not at all directed towards tragedy, but she was, as I have already said, a good comic actress. I particularly recollect her performance of Mrs. Sullen, and as there was no restraint of delicacy on her mind, she

took care to give some of the more prurient passages in the character with all due point and effect.

When Derrick used to visit my father's cottage at Highgate, after a rural walk by himself, as there was no spare-bed in the house, he was accustomed to sleep in my cradle, with his legs resting on a chair at the bottom. He was a very little man.

As his supposed wife was very pretty, and not likely to hold out against a siege of gallantry, it is not surprising that she was tempted to desert a poor poet, and a two-pair of stairs floor, in a low neighbourhood. As far as her history was generally known, she perhaps might have had as many lovers as Anacreon boasts of mistresses, though perhaps she could not so accurately recollect the number. One circumstance of her conduct ought to be mentioned, as it illustrates the character of women of her description, and may operate as a warning to those who are likely to be ensnared by purchasable beauty. She had been separated from Derrick many years. In the mean time he had become generally known, and was countenanced by Dr. Johnson, to whom it is said, he suggested the omission of the word *ocean* in the first edition of his celebrated Dictionary.

Mrs. Lessingham had risen on the stage, and was reported to be a favourite with the manager. She kept an elegant house in a fashionable part of the town. Derrick, at this time, was able to support himself by his connexion with the booksellers, and by his literary productions; and, without any pecuniary views, he was desirous to renew an acquaintance with his former pseudo-spouse. He therefore called on her, and sent up his name by her superb footman. The lady declared that she knew no person of that name, and ordered the servant immediately to dismiss him. Derrick, conceiving that the man must have committed some mistake, insisted on seeing the lady. At length she came forward in sight of Derrick, called him an impudent fellow, and threatened to send for a constable unless he left the house.

This unexpected reception from a woman who had lived with him some years, had borne his name, and by whose instruction she had been able to become a popular actress, and to rise into affluence, affected him so much that he was quite overcome, and immediately departed, though "more in sorrow than in anger."

Derrick, after his separation from Mrs. Lessingham, or rather her desertion of him, lived in respectable society, and must have conducted himself properly, as he formed many fashionable connexions, who exerted themselves with so much zeal in his favour as to procure for him the situation of master of the ceremonies at Bath. He had previously published a volume of his poems, and as there were a considerable number of subscribers, they afford an evident testimony in favour of his character.

Like most of those who rise from obscurity, he was, on his elevation at Bath, very fond of pomp and show. His dress was always fine, and he kept a footman almost as fine as himself. When he visited London, his footman always walked behind him, and to show that he was his servant, he generally crossed the streets several times, that



the man might be seen to follow him. Derrick, I understand, was lively, but too familiar in his conversation; and Mr. Oldys, the celebrated literary antiquary, another intimate friend of my father, who lived before my remembrance, thought him a flippant fellow, never spoke when Derrick was in the room, and when addressed by him, gave him short and discouraging answers. As Derrick honoured my birth by an ode, it would be ungrateful in me not to rescue so sublime a composition from oblivion, as perhaps no other production of his muse is now extant.

## ODE.

Muse, give Dr. Taylor joy,  
For Dr. Taylor has a boy;  
Little Nancy brought him forth,  
Nancy, dame of mighty worth;  
May he like his mother shine,  
Who can boast of charms divine;  
Proving like his father wise,  
Always prompt to *mind his eyes*;  
And may fortune in her flight,  
Always keep the child in *sight*.

Derrick published four volumes of the poetical works of Dryden, which were the first collection of that author's poems. They are referred to by Dr. Johnson, in his life of Dryden. Derrick, in his own volume of poems, introduced the following lines as a genuine production of Pope, and as they have not appeared in any edition of Pope's works, and as it might now be difficult to find Derrick's volume, they may not improperly be introduced in this place.

## { IMPROMPTU. }

*By Mr. Pope, on sleeping in a bed belonging to John Duke of Argyle.*

With no poetic ardours fir'd,  
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;  
That here he lov'd, or here expir'd,  
Begets no numbers, grave or gay.  
Beneath thy roof, Argyle, are bred  
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie  
Stretch'd forth on honour's nobler bed  
Beneath a nobler roof, the sky.

When Derrick died I know not, and I should not revert to Mrs. Lessingham, if she had not been so conspicuous in her day, and if her example did not hold forth a lesson against the influence of beauty devoid of moral principles. The manager before mentioned was very much attached to her, and she might have closed her days with as much comfort as intrusive retrospection, if ever it did intrude upon her, would admit, as he was a gentleman, shrewd, intelligent, and well acquainted with the world. She had two or three sons by him, who bore a satisfactory resemblance to the father, if indeed such mothers ever can be trusted.

It was said, that after her desertion of Derrick, she was married to

a naval gentleman named Stott; and was subsequently under the protection of Admiral Boscawen. No doubt she had listened to the addresses of many others who had no reason to consider themselves as despairing lovers. The only improbable part of her acting in the character of Mrs. Sullen was in the chamber scene with Archer, as from her general manner it did not seem likely that she should resist his importunities when he appeared as a gentleman.

The theatrical manager had built a house for her on Hampstead Heath, in a romantic and retired situation, as well as supported her in her town residence, but nothing could control the inconstancy of her nature. Why, or when she left that gentleman, I never knew; for, though I was very intimate with him, her name never occurred between us. After she quitted him, she was sometime *protected*, as the delicate term is, by the late Justice Addington, whom she deserted for a young man engaged at Covent Garden theatre, and styled by his theatrical associates the *teapot* actor, as his attitudes seemed to be generally founded on the model of that useful vehicle of domestic refreshment. The justice never mentioned her after but by the most opprobrious appellations.

---

## CHAPTER II.

It is now time for me to return to what Mr. Gibbon styles "the vainest and most disgusting of the pronouns," though certainly not so in the estimation of the late Lord Erskine. All that I know of my ancestors,—to adopt a word of importance to the proud, who think with Dr. Young that

They who on glorious ancestors enlarge  
Produce their debt instead of a discharge,—

I learned from Dr. Monsey, one of my father's earliest and warmest friends, who informed me that my great-grandfather was an eminent surgeon at Norwich, and highly respected in his private, as well as professional character. He had so grave and dignified an aspect and demeanour, that the superstitious among his neighbours imputed supernatural knowledge to him, and upon any disasters and losses consulted him as a *conjurer*. No mistake of that kind was ever made respecting any other part of our family that I ever heard of.

Dr. Monsey related the following story as a proof of my great-grandfather's reputation for supernatural knowledge and wisdom. A countryman had lost a silver spoon, and excited by my venerable grandsire's reputed powers above the ordinary race of mankind, waited on him, requesting to know whether or not the spoon had been stolen, and, if so, desiring that he would enable him to discover the



thief. The old gentleman took him into a garret which contained nothing but an old chest of drawers, telling the simple rustic, that in order to effect the discovery he must raise the devil, asking him if he had resolution enough to face so formidable and terrific an appearance. The countryman assured him that he had, as his conscience was clear, and he could defy the devil and all his works. The surgeon, after an awful warning, bade him open the first drawer, and tell what he saw. The man did so, and answered "Nothing." "Then," said the reputed seer, "he is not there." The old gentleman, again exhorting the man, in the most solemn manner, to summon all his fortitude for the next trial, directed him to open the second drawer. The man did so, with unshaken firmness, and in answer to the same question repeated "Nothing." The venerable old gentleman simply said, "Then he is not there;" but, with increased solemnity, endeavoured to impress the sturdy hind with such awe as to induce him to forbear from further inquiry, but in vain; conscious integrity fortified his mind, and he determined to abide the event. My worthy ancestor then, with an assumed expression of apprehension himself, ordered him to prepare for the certain appearance of the evil spirit on opening the third drawer. The countryman, undismayed, resolutely pulled open the drawer, and being asked what he saw, said, "I see nothing but an empty purse."—"Well," said the surgeon, "and is not that the devil?" The honest countryman had sense enough to perceive the drift of this ludicrous trial, and immediately proclaimed it over the city of Norwich. The result was that my venerable and humorous ancestor was never again troubled with an appeal to his divining faculty and magical power, but was still more respected for the good sense and whimsical manner in which he had annihilated his supernatural character, and descended into a mere mortal.

Such is the account of my great-grandfather, and I never endeavoured, nor am I in the least solicitous, to trace the line to a more distant genealogy. This sagacious and sportive surgeon had two sons, one who was afterward so well known to the world as the celebrated Chevalier Taylor, and the principal oculist of his time. He was not only oculist to King George the Second, but to every sovereign in Europe. He published more than forty tracts, in all the continental languages, on the structure, disorders, and treatment of diseased eyes, which received the approbation of the best authorities.

When my grandfather solicited the honour of being appointed oculist to Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, that monarch granted his request, but would not permit him to practise in his dominions, alleging that he should take care of the eyes of his subjects himself, that they might see no more than was necessary for the interest and glory of their country. It was, however, understood that the monarch had been told that to admit a foreigner to practise would be throwing an odium on the medical professors of his own territories.

The chevalier, whom I was too young to remember, was, I have always heard, a tall, handsome man, and a great favourite with the ladies. He was much addicted to splendour in dress, and to an

expensive style of domestic expenditure; otherwise, with his high professional reputation and acknowledged skill, he might no doubt have left almost a princely fortune to his family.

He published his own memoirs, in three volumes, in which he certainly shows no remarkable diffidence in recording his own talents and attainments, as well as the influence of his person and powers of conversation on the female sex. He had received the rudiments of his professional education under his venerable father at Norwich, but afterward attended all the medical and chirurgical schools of the metropolis, and became, as I have said, a favourite pupil of the celebrated Cheselden, to whom he dedicated one of his works on the disorders of the eyes. He not only distinguished himself as the chief practical oculist of his time, but also by his profound knowledge of the theory of vision, and his illustration of the physiological use of the several component parts of the organ of sight. The late Sir Walter Farquhar assured me, that he had often seen him perform the operation of couching, or depression, of the cataract; that he was most sedulous in his attention, and that his manual dexterity appeared like the touch of magic. He may indeed be said to have been born with a genius for his art. He sometimes adopted the present mode of extracting the cataract, or opaque crystalline humour, but abandoned it as less certain and more dangerous than depression.

Many years after, the celebrated Percival Pott, one of the best practical surgeons, according to general estimation, in this or any other country, published a tract to demonstrate the superior advantage of depression; but extraction became the fashion in the medical world, still maintains its ascendancy, and is certainly practised with great skill and success by many eminent professors in this metropolis. I wish they were equally skilful in treating inflammations of the eye, or that they never indulged themselves in experimental practices on that essential organ of human happiness, as I have seen many dreadful victims of their injurious and destructive applications. I may here not improperly introduce an anecdote relating to the subject.

The Baron de Wenzel, in the earlier part of his life, had been a pupil of my grandfather, who, on hearing of the baron's extraordinary fame in London, and meeting him in company, privately hinted to him, that when he was his pupil he had not discovered such docility as to promise so high a degree of professional repute. The baron, piqued at this remark, pointed to his shoes, which were decorated with brilliant diamonds, and simply said, "*regardez mes boucles*," but evidently spoke loud, in order to attract the attention of the company, as well as of my grandfather. What answer the chevalier made I know not, but it was probably very sharp, as he was well known to excel in repartee. The baron was chiefly raised into notice by his success in performing the operation of extraction on the eyes of the old Duke of Bedford, whose memory will ever live in the Letters of Junius. The duke not only rewarded the baron with five hundred pounds, but procured for him the honour of being oculist to his



majesty, which title my grandfather had enjoyed in the former reign. On the death of the baron, that honour, as I said before, was conferred upon myself, and upon my deceased brother, who practised in conjunction with me.

When my grandfather for the last time quitted this country, as he never returned to it, I have no recollection of his voice, and should be equally forgetful of his person, if he had not, within six months after his departure, sent us a portrait of himself, painted at Rome by the Chevalier Rosco: it came while his features were fresh upon my memory, and was deemed by the family a very strong likeness, so strong, indeed, as often to cheat me into a belief that I distinctly remembered the original. This portrait is in my possession. It represents him in splendid attire, and in a dignified attitude, holding the instrument for couching in his hand, with an artificial eye, for the illustration of a lecture which he appears to be delivering. He was accustomed to deliver lectures on the structure and disorders of the eye, in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Dublin, and all places where a learned and scientific audience might be expected to attend.

He went abroad soon after the publication of his own memoirs. I remember to have read a criticism on this work in an old number of the Monthly Review, in which it was said that the chevalier was "a coxcomb, but a coxcomb of parts." Not long after there was a report, apparently authentic, that he had died abroad, and as he was so conspicuous a character in his day, my father thought of writing his life, simply detailing facts, and wholly free from that egotism which certainly characterized the chevalier's own biography; and I believe he entered into an agreement for that purpose with Mr. Dodsley, the predecessor of my late excellent friend Mr. George Nicol, of Pall Mall.

For this purpose my father had collected many curious particulars, among which were several extraordinary adventures. Not being practised in literary pursuits, he submitted these materials to Mr. Henry Jones, the author of a tragedy entitled "The Earl of Essex," with whom he was then intimate. Jones was to mould these materials into a form suitable for publication, but being a careless, dissipated, and unprincipled man, he was obliged suddenly to leave his lodgings at Lambeth, where he was in debt for rent, and fearful of being discovered by other creditors, he left my father's MSS. behind, and they were said to have been consumed as waste paper.

My father, pursuant to his agreement with Mr. Dodsley, having announced the intended work in the newspapers, and having given authority to Jones to prepare it for publication, that profligate scribbler impudently published a work in two volumes, partly from the recollection of my father's materials, but almost wholly of his own invention, entitled "The Life of the Chevalier Taylor, written by his Son." Shocked at this violation of confidence and of friendship, and at the low trash imputed to him, my father exposed the imposition in the daily newspapers of the time. But Jones, having been paid by the bookseller, or rather by my father, in advance, to stimulate his

industry, there remained no remedy but the uncertain and expensive course of law, to which my father was always insuperably averse. He, of course, discarded Jones, who thereby lost an hospitable friend, and who, after a life of low debauchery, being found drunk under the shambles in Newport-market, was conveyed to St. Martin's work-house, where he soon after died.

Such, I understand, was the history of the work, and such the fate of its wretched author. Jones had been a bricklayer's labourer, but having natural talents, he had turned his attention to literature, if scribbling for newspapers may be so termed, in which many of his poetical trifles had been inserted; and after the successful representation of his tragedy, he attracted the notice of the great Earl of Chesterfield. He had offended that nobleman by some profligate conduct, and the earl had withdrawn his patronage. Jones, in order to conciliate his benefactor, addressed some verses to him, on holding the knocker at his gate without having courage to make it sound, on account of his lordship's displeasure. These verses restored him to favour, but he soon forfeited it again by a return to his old habits of dissipation.

The late Rev. William Peters, a member of the Royal Academy, chaplain to that institution, a good artist, and a particular friend of mine, confirmed all that I had heard of Jones, who was well known to him. He described Jones as an Irishman, with manners and accent of the lowest people of his country. He was fond of poetry and painting, and at every convivial, or rather drunken bout, always proposed a toast in their favour, pronounced in the following manner, viz: "The Pin and the Pencil." Mr. Peters told me that the last time he saw Jones was at a respectable public-house at the corner of Hart-street, in Bow-street, Covent Garden, where the landlord had just kicked him down stairs for attempting to take liberties with his wife.

The tragedy of "The Earl of Essex" was favourably received on account of its own merits, but principally owing to the admirable manner in which the hero of the piece was represented by my father's and my old friend Mr. Ross.

---

### CHAPTER III.

To return to my grandfather and his family. He had a brother, James Taylor, A. M. who entered into the church, and became one of the chaplains to George the Second. He was also chaplain to his majesty's own regiment of horse, and rector of Broadway, in the county of Dorset. He published a work entitled "Remarks on the German Empire; with an historical account of the towns on the Rhine, and the operations of the campaign in 1743." His son, Philip Riley Taylor, Esq. of Beccles Hall, Suffolk, was my godfather. This



gentleman, during his permanent residence at his seat in Suffolk, for a year or two sent game to my father; but, without any difference between them, all intercourse ceased till my grandfather, the chevalier, took my mother and me to his native city, Norwich, where I understood his fame was so widely spread that the church-bells were rung on his arrival.

After passing some days at Norwich among relations and friends, where many patients attended him, he proceeded with us on a visit to his nephew at Beccles Hall. All I remember of the place is, that it was a large mansion, with a spacious lawn before it; but of the tenants I have no recollection.

As my grandfather was, by all reports, a man of extraordinary talents, I may be permitted to dwell a little upon his character. He was, it seems, very fond of me, and wanted to take me abroad with him, promising to give me the best education, and to secure me a good fortune; but as I was the eldest son, and my father expected that in due time I should be able to assist him in his profession, the offer was declined. As a proof of my grandfather's fondness for me, he would throw himself on the floor in his rich attire, suffer me to sit on his breast as if I were on a horse, and give his laced neckcloth to me to hold as a bridle. I should be ashamed of recording such trifling incidents, if they did not tend to illustrate my grandfather's character.

It is now time to say something of my father. Having struggled with difficulties in his youth, when he left the college Du Plessis in Paris, he came to London and resided with his mother till the return of the chevalier, who engaged him to assist him in his profession, and took pains to enable him to advance his own professional reputation. An incident occurred soon after my father's arrival in London, which might have been attended with fatal consequences. Being dressed in Parisian gayety with bag and sword, and walking through Southwark fair, immortalized by Hogarth, he was taken for a young Frenchman. His fine white stockings were objects too tempting to a mischievous young butcher, who contrived to splash them from the kennel. My father was so incensed that he drew his sword and followed the butcher, who ran off, and easily escaped among the crowd, otherwise my father declared he was so incensed that he should have run him through the body. Some good-natured people hearing him speak with a French accent, pitied him as a young foreigner, and soon appeased him.

My father was some time patronized by Cheselden, who thought so much of his skill in diseases of the eye that he generally recommended patients to him. Cheselden published a tract relating an account of his own successful operation upon the cataracts of a boy who was born blind, and the extraordinary effect of sight upon the patient.

Many years after, a similar case of a boy born blind came under the care of my father, who was equally successful in performing the same operation, and the result confirmed all that Mr. Cheselden had stated respecting the effect of novel vision on those who are born blind. It scarcely need be observed, that infants gradually acquire a knowledge

of external objects, but that to those who receive sight at a more advanced stage of life all such objects form nothing but a confused mass, which they must learn to discriminate by degrees.

My father's patient was a native of Ightham in Kent, and a young musician, who, though blind, used to perform during the seasons at Tunbridge and other places. My father published an account of this case, and it excited nearly as much attention in the medical world as that of Mr. Cheselden. A few of the effects of the case may be here properly mentioned. After the boy had obtained some power of distinguishing external objects, by feeling them for some time, and looking hard at them, when presented to him, it was long before he had any notion of distances. If he wanted to take hold of any article that he saw on the table, he generally made a snatch at it, and on such occasions darted his hand beyond the object or before it, and seldom reached it till after many attempts. The success of the operation excited great attention in the neighbourhood where my father resided.

An alarming proof of the patient's ignorance of distances occurred one night, which was fortunately observed by the watchman. The boy was going, as he stated afterward, to step from the top of the house in Hatton Garden over to Bartlett's Buildings, to catch hold of the moon. The watchman, an intelligent man, who had heard of the case, luckily saw him as he was on the point of stepping forward, and uttered a loud shout, bidding him get back into the house immediately. The boy obeyed, much terrified, and retreated into the garret. The watchman instantly apprized the family of what had happened, and care was taken to secure the boy from the recurrence of any such danger. The boy, after he became familiar with his own reflection in a mirror, was fond of looking at his image, which he used to call his man, and said, "I can make my man do every thing that I do but shut his eyes." This case excited so much curiosity and attention, that Worlidge, an eminent artist then in London, took a drawing of the patient, from which he made an etching, and published it.

My great-grandfather performed the same operation a few years after, on a person born blind, with the same success, but the former case had been so generally known that the subsequent one excited little attention, except among the medical professors. It happened also that the case of a boy who was born blind was submitted to my care; and I performed the operation at that old and respectable inn, the Swan with Two Necks, in Lad-lane, near Cheapside. My late brother, a member of the College of Surgeons, and several country practitioners were present, and the operation completely succeeded. The boy was properly kept at the inn till he could distinguish objects and their relative distances. He returned in due time into the country, and the last intelligence I heard of him was from one of the proprietors of the inn, whom I accidentally met, and who informed me that my patient had obtained the complete use of sight in the eye operated upon, and that he was to have been brought to town that I might perform the operation on his other eye, but had died just before he was to have commenced his journey.



I was first appointed oculist in ordinary to his late majesty, when Prince of Wales, in the year 1789, and in the following year to his royal father, George the Third. On the death of that revered monarch, I was honoured with the same appointment under his successor, George the Fourth. On my first appointment by his late majesty, when Prince of Wales, being known to be near-sighted, some wag wrote the following lines in a ministerial paper. The poetical satirist was, however, mistaken in supposing that there is a salary annexed to the office, though, indeed, I have heard that my grandfather, in the height of his fame and prosperity, had declined to receive the same salary allotted to the Poet Laureate. The following are the lines:—

IMPROMPTU,

*On the appointment of John Taylor, Esq. to be Oculist to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*

Oh! Prince, since thou an oculist  
Hast ta'en into thy pay,  
'Tis hoped he'll chase dull party's mist,  
And spread truth's radiant day.

But if, whate'er may be his skill,  
That mist we still shall find,  
The homely adage to fulfil,  
The blind\* will lead the blind.

About this time I began to turn my attention towards literary pursuits, and particularly towards the public press, considering it a shorter and more probable path, than my profession afforded, to that independence which, from a very early period of my life, I was always anxious to attain.

I shall take a little more notice of my family, a subject of no interest to the public at large, but rather an obtrusion on its patience, though dear to myself, and then direct my attention to what I hope will be found of more "mark and likelihood." My good mother was allowed to have been very handsome in her early days, and so, indeed, she remained to a great degree within my recollection, allowing for the progress of time and the number of her children. The respect, affection, and gratitude due to her memory induce me to add that she possessed an excellent understanding, was fond of literature, conversant with history, an affectionate wife and mother, a sprightly, intelligent, and good-humoured companion, and always maintained a most exemplary character.

After many years absence from this country, my grandfather's death was noticed in the following manner in a continental paper:—  
"Having given sight to many thousands, the celebrated Chevalier Taylor lately died blind, at a very advanced age, in a convent at Prague."

WILLIAM OLDYS, Esq. This gentleman, whose profound knowledge of English literature has raised his name into high estimation

\* Mr. Taylor is said to be near-sighted,

with literary antiquaries, and whose manuscripts are the subjects of frequent reference, was the intimate friend of my father, but as I was then an infant, what I know of him was derived from the accounts of my parents. All that I could recollect from this source of information, I communicated to my friend Mr. D'Israeli, who has inserted it in the second series of his very amusing work intituled "The Curiosities of Literature." Mr. Oldys was, I understood, the natural son of a gentleman named Harris, who lived in a respectable style in Kensington Square. How he came to adopt the name of Oldys, or where he received his education, I never heard. My father, who was well acquainted with the Latin and French languages, informed me that Mr. Oldys was a sound scholar, though he chiefly devoted himself to English literature. Mr. Oldys was of a very reserved character, and when he passed his evenings at my father's house in Hatton Garden, he always preferred the fireside in the kitchen, that he might not be obliged to mingle with other visitors. He was so particular in his habits, that he could not smoke his pipe with ease, till his chair was fixed close to a particular crack in the floor. He had suffered the vicissitudes of fortune before my father knew him, but was then easy in his circumstances, having been appointed Norroy king-at-arms. I shall borrow from Mr. D'Israeli's work the account of this appointment as I related it to him, and as that gentleman has inserted it in the third volume of his new series.

"Oldys, as my father informed me, lived many years in quiet obscurity in the Fleet prison, but at last was 'spirited up' to make his situation known to the Duke of Norfolk of that time, who received Oldys's letter while he was at dinner with some friends. The duke immediately communicated the contents to the company, observing that he had long been anxious to know what had become of an old, though an humble friend, and was happy, by that letter, to find that he was still alive. He then called for his *gentleman* (a kind of humble friend whom noblemen used to retain under that name in former days), and desired him to go immediately to the Fleet prison with money for the immediate need of Oldys, to procure an account of his debts, and to discharge them. Oldys was soon after, either by the duke's gift or interest, appointed Norroy king-at-arms; and I remember that his official regalia came into my father's hands at his death." Mr. Oldys had been one of the librarians to the celebrated Harley, Earl of Oxford, and in that capacity had become known to the Duke of Norfolk. My father was appointed executor to Mr. Oldys, who had stood godfather to one of his sons.

Soon after the Duke of Norfolk had removed all pecuniary difficulties from Mr. Oldys, he procured for him, as I have said, the situation of Norroy king-at-arms, a situation peculiarly suited to his turn for antiquities. On some occasion, when the king-at-arms was obliged to ride on horseback in a public procession, the predecessor of Mr. Oldys in the cavalcade had a proclamation to read, but, confused by the noise of the surrounding multitude, he made many mistakes, and, anxious to be accurate, he turned back to every passage to



correct himself, and therefore appeared to the people to be an ignorant blunderer. When Mr. Oldys had to recite the same proclamation, though he made, he said, more mistakes than his predecessor, he read on through thick and thin, never stopping a moment to correct his errors, and thereby excited the applause of the people, though he declared that the other gentleman had been much better qualified for the duty than himself.

The shyness of Mr. Oldys's disposition, and the simplicity of his manners, had induced him to decline an introduction to my grandfather, the Chevalier Taylor, who was always splendid in attire, and had been used to the chief societies in every court of Europe; but my grandfather had heard so much of Mr. Oldys, that he resolved to be acquainted with him, and therefore one evening when Oldys was enjoying his philosophical pipe by the kitchen-fire, the chevalier invaded his retreat, and without ceremony addressed him in the Latin language. Oldys, surprised and gratified to find a scholar in a fine gentleman, threw off his reserve, answered him in the same language, and the colloquy continued for at least two hours, Oldys suspending his pipe all the time, my father, not so good a scholar, only occasionally interposing an illustrative remark. This anecdote, upon which the reader may implicitly depend, is a full refutation of the insolent abuse of my grandfather by Dr. Johnson, as recorded in the life of that literary hippopotamus by Mr. Boswell. The truth is, that among the faults and virtues of that great moralist, he could not eradicate envy from his mind, as he indeed has confessed in his works; and in respect to colloquial latinity, he who was a *sloven* was no doubt mortified to be excelled by a *beau*, and this is probably the true cause of his illiberal and unjust description of my grandfather.

On the death of Oldys, my father, who was his executor, became possessed of what property he left, which was very small, including his regalia as king-at-arms. Mr. Oldys had engaged to furnish a bookseller in the Strand, whose name was Walker, with ten years of the life of Shakspeare, unknown to the biographers and commentators, but he died, and "made no sign" of the projected work. The bookseller made a demand of twenty guineas on my father, alleging that he had advanced that sum to Mr. Oldys, who had promised to provide the matter in question. My father paid this sum to the bookseller soon after he had attended the remains of his departed friend to the grave. The manuscripts of Oldys, consisting of a few books written in a small hand, and abundantly interlined, remained long in my father's possession, but by desire of Dr. Percy, afterward Bishop of Dromore, were submitted to his inspection, through the medium of Dr. Monsey, who was an intimate friend of Dr. Percy. They continued in Dr. Percy's hands some years. He had known Mr. Oldys in the early part of his life, and spoke respectfully of his character. The last volume of Oldys's manuscripts that I ever saw, was at my friend the late Mr. William Gifford's house, in James-street, Westminster, while he was preparing a new edition of the works of Shireley; and I learned from him that it was lent to him by Mr. Heber.



Mr. Oldys told my father that he was the author of the little song which was once admired, and which Mr. D'Israeli has introduced in his new series, relying upon the known veracity of Oldys from other sources besides the testimony of my parents. There is no great merit in the composition, but as it shows the benevolent and philosophic temper of the author, I shall submit it to the reader as an old family relic.

Busy, curious, thirsty fly,  
 Drink with me, and drink as I!  
 Freely welcome to my cup,  
 Couldst thou sip and sip it up:  
 Make the most of life you may;  
 Life is short and wears away.

Both alike are mine and thine,  
 Hastening quick to their decline!  
 Thine's a summer, mine no more,  
 Though repeated to threescore!  
 Threescore summers when they're gone,  
 Will appear as short as one!

Tilburina says, "an oyster may be crossed in love," and so, perhaps, may a cold literary antiquary. Mr. Oldys frequently indulged his spleen in sarcasms against female inconstancy, and often concluded his remarks with the following couplet, but I know not whether it was composed by himself.

If women were little as they are good,  
 A peascod would make them a gown and a hood.

My friend Mr. D'Israeli is mistaken in saying that, "on the death of Oldys, Dr. Kippis, editor of the *Biographia Britannica*, looked over the manuscripts." It was not till near thirty years after the death of Oldys that they were submitted to his inspection, and at his recommendation were purchased by the late Mr. Cadell. The funeral expenses had been paid by my father immediately after the interment of Oldys, and not, as Mr. D'Israeli says, by the "twenty guineas, which, perhaps, served to bury the writer."

My friend Mr. Alexander Chalmers, to whom the literary world is indebted for many valuable works, chiefly biographical, has, I find, written a life of Mr. Oldys, which I have not seen, and I doubt not that it is marked by his usual candour, research, and fidelity. I must not, however mention Mr. Chalmers merely as a biographer, great as his merits are in that character, as he is the author of innumerable fugitive pieces, remarkable for fancy, humour, wit, and satire, which have been published anonymously, and have been always justly admired. But I ought particularly to mention a work, in three octavo volumes, entitled "*The Projector*," which appeared in successive numbers through the *Gentleman's Magazine*, one of the oldest, indeed the oldest, and indisputably the most valuable of our periodical productions of a similar description, and which since its origin, a hundred years ago, has always maintained an undiminished reputation. Mr.

Chalmers himself collected these numbers into three volumes, and, in point of ironical humour and sound moral tendency, they deserve a place in every library.

Mr. D'Israeli mentions a caricature of the person of Mr. Oldys, drawn by the well-known Major Grose, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted, and who mentioned Mr. Oldys to me with great respect. The major was a man of great humour and learning. I shall, perhaps, have occasion to mention him hereafter.

#### CHAPTER IV.

ONE of my father's intimate and early friends was Mr. James Brooke, who lived till I was far advanced in life. He had been apprenticed to an engraver, and practised the business some years, but having had a good education, and possessing literary talents, he devoted himself wholly to the profession of an author. His literary talents and political knowledge were so well known, that he was engaged to conduct "The North Briton," on the relinquishment of that work by Mr. Wilkes. He wrote several prologues and epilogues in the early part of his life, and songs for Vauxhall Gardens. He was well known to all the wits of his time.

Mr. Brooke was a distinguished member of convivial parties, and, as a proof of the easy familiarity of his character, he was generally styled "Jemmy Brooke." He was particularly intimate with Ross the actor, Macklin, Hugh Kelly, and Goldsmith, as well as with Richardson, the author of *Clarissa*, who stood godfather to his second daughter, christened by the name of that celebrated novel.

There is in many families some overbearing friend, who takes great liberties and assumes much authority; such was Mr. Brooke in ours. He exercised a control over the children; but though it was irksome to us at the time, it was eventually a great advantage in forming our manners and directing our pursuits. He had married a very beautiful young woman, the daughter of a respectable tradesman in the city, by whom he had three children, a son, who was my school-fellow at Ponder's End, Enfield, and two daughters. The daughters lived many years in our family. The elder is still alive, a venerable spinster. The younger was the third wife of the late Philip Champion Crespigny, Esq. king's proctor, and member of parliament for Sudbury. Knowing the early and almost infantine connexion between me and his wife, Mr. Crespigny obligingly offered to admit me into his office, as an indentured clerk, without a premium, though I believe that a thousand pounds is the sum usually required on such occasions, and was probably higher in the office of king's proctor. My father, however, requiring my assistance in his profession as oculist, having a large family, and conceiving that he should find great difficulty in



supporting me during the period of my clerkship, deemed it expedient to decline the generous offer. I have often thought with regret of having lost so favourable an opportunity, which, as Shakspeare says, was my "tide in the affairs of men."

A whimsical circumstance took place in Mr. Brooke's youth. During the time of Bartholomew fair, young Brooke was absent from his father's house for two days, but as he was a very intelligent, as well as lively young man, in whose understanding his father placed great confidence, the family were not under any alarm. His father, during his absence, to show a country friend the humours of London, happened to enter one of the booths in Smithfield in the height of the fair, and the first object that attracted his attention was his own son on the stage, actively employed in what at that time was styled the "Jockey Dance," with a sportsman's cap and whip. It may be proper to observe, that Bartholomew fair was then of a more respectable description than it is at present. Yates, an admirable comic performer, and Shuter, who Garrick said was the best comic actor that he had ever seen, had each a booth at this fair; and my father assured me that he had seen Mrs. Pritchard, who has been described as one of the very best actresses that ever adorned the British stage, perform at the fair.

The talents of Mrs. Pritchard were confined neither to tragedy nor comedy; she was equally excellent in both. Even the cynical Churchill bestows a high panegyric on her theatrical powers, and it was acknowledged at the time that her Lady Macbeth was not more terrific than her Doll Common was humorous; but she was equally successful in representing characters of the upper and middle ranks of life. The amiable and elegant Mr. William Whitehead, poet laureate of that time, testified his respect and esteem for this great actress, by writing her epitaph, which appears on a tablet in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey; yet Dr. Johnson has degraded her memory by representing her as an ignorant woman, who talked of her "gownd." Surely so accomplished a scholar, and so intelligent a man as Mr. Whitehead was able to appreciate her character, and he would hardly have annexed his name to the epitaph, had she been so ignorant as she is described by Dr. Johnson.

Mr. Brooke was a man of a very irritable temper, and frequently gave way to the most violent impulses of sudden anger. His wife, a lovely and amiable woman, had for many years borne with patience the impetuosity of his nature, but at length her fortitude was exhausted, and she left him. Having no other resource, she adopted the theatrical profession, and was soon engaged at the Edinburgh theatre, where, in comic characters, particularly old ladies, she appeared to great advantage; and many years afterward was engaged on the Norwich stage. Immediately after the retreat of his wife, Mr. Brooke, who possessed literary talents of no ordinary description, wrote an advertisement, which was inserted in the newspapers of that time, addressing his wife in the most pathetic manner, imploring her to return; appealing to her feelings as a mother, and representing the forlorn



and helpless state of her three children, deprived of maternal solicitude and affection. Mrs. Brooke, however, having long and thoroughly tried his temper, considered it utterly incurable, and never renewed the intercourse. This advertisement was shown to me many years ago by the late Rev. Mr. Harpur, of the British Museum, who had extracted it from an old newspaper, and I remember it struck me as one of the most affecting compositions I had ever read.

In the early part of my life, Mrs. Brooke came to London, and called on my mother, who had been a most affectionate friend, and, in effect, a mother to her daughters. I then saw her for a few minutes only, as I was obliged to leave home on some concern for my father, but remember that I was struck with the beauty of her countenance and the dignity of her figure. After sustaining an eminent station at the Norwich theatre during many years, she was afflicted with a cancer, which wholly unfitted her for the stage, and she was advised to come to London, and throw herself on the protection of her son-in-law, Mr. Crespigny, who was liberally disposed to afford her a suitable provision, and offered to give her an adequate sum of money, or settle an annuity upon her. She was advised to accept the first proposal, as it was observed that, if she exhausted the money before her death, it was probable she would then obtain the annuity. Which part of the alternative she accepted, I never heard, and never thought proper to inquire.

On her arrival in London I was introduced to her by her daughters, who thought that as she had few acquaintances in London, I might occasionally visit her as an acceptable companion. In the whole course of my acquaintance with the female world, I never knew a more amiable and intelligent woman. Her face exhibited the interesting remains of great beauty, with the most benignant expression of countenance. There is a portrait of her painted by Worlidge, an artist of high reputation in his day, which is now in the possession of her elder daughter. I have a mezzotinto print from this portrait. Mr. Boswell, in his account of his tour through the Highlands of Scotland, says that, in a public-house, he saw a similar print, and one of the celebrated Archibald Bower, who wrote the Lives of the Popes, and was proved to be an impostor in his account of his imprisonment in the Inquisition. Mrs. Brooke, after bearing with fortitude and resignation, severe sufferings under her disorder, died in the year 1782, and was buried in the old church-yard at Marylebone. I attended her funeral, as I did, many years after, that of her husband, both, as I understood, having expressed a desire that I should show this mark of respect to their remains. I never knew them together, and they never met after Mrs. Brooke's retreat from her husband.

I must indulge myself, or, perhaps, rather my vanity, in the insertion of a short proof of her friendship, if not of her poetical powers. Sitting one evening with her, for indeed I never suffered a day to pass without seeing her, I took up the pen, and wrote a few lines extempore, intimating that it was odd, having scribbled so many verses upon indifferent subjects, that I had never written any upon

her, who was so high in my esteem and friendship. She took the pen from me, and immediately produced the following answer.

You say it is odd, my heart's dearest friend,  
That in verse you had never the thought to commend,  
Those virtues your kind partiality gives  
To one who, in truth, is as simple as lives—  
All the merit she claims is a friendship that's true,  
And her pride and her boast is her friendship with you.

As I was often profuse in expressing my high opinion of this lady, whenever I was with her, she more than once desired that I would read a poem, entitled "The Squire of Dames," written by a Mr. Mendez, a rich gentleman of the Jewish persuasion. It is in Dodsley's collection of poems. Mr. Mendez was the author of "The Chaplet," a musical afterpiece, which was very popular in its day. He also published a volume of poems, partly selected, and partly his own production. In this volume were included some stanzas to the celebrated Mrs. Woffington, beginning—

Once more I'll tune the vocal shell ;

which were generally attributed to Garrick, on account of his known partiality to that actress, but were really written by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, one of the most vigorous satirical poets of his time. They appear in the three volumes of his works published by Lord Holland, but are more creditable to his lordship's love of genius and his sense of humour, than to his regard for delicacy, as there are many passages in these volumes that ought never to have seen the light, however pointed, ingenious, and facetious.\*

Upon my asking Mrs. Brooke why she had so particularly desired me to read "The Squire of Dames," she declined telling me the reason, and said she left it to my own discernment. After having read the poem, and reflected on its drift, finding that the heroine, though deemed exemplary for virtue, appeared to have all the frailty which satirists impute to the female sex, I concluded that she intended to induce me to infer that I thought too favourably of her, and to intimate that she partook of all human errors, particularly those of her own sex.†

\* Sir Charles Hanbury Williams was our minister at the court of Prussia. Close to his residence in Berlin was a house of bad fame, which, soon after his arrival, was prohibited, in compliment to his representative character. Sir Charles deemed it necessary to apply to the Prussian government, requesting the restoration of the house in question, alleging that, while the house existed in its former state, he knew where to find his servants, but when it was abolished, they were so dispersed through the city, that he found it difficult to discover them. The house was then restored to its former privilege, and the servants to a place where they were sure to be found.

† Whatever might have been the errors of this amiable woman, the goodness of her heart, the benevolence of her disposition, and the rectitude of her principles, at least during the latter period of her life, may be properly received as an expiatory atonement for any thing that might have happened subsequent to her separation from her husband, who, if of a different temper, might have rendered her the delight of his life, and the ornament of society.



## CHAPTER V.

MR. PRATT.—At the apartments of Mrs. Brooke, I first became acquainted with this gentleman, who had been many years known to the public, and whose productions, under the assumed name of Courteney Melmoth, were deservedly popular and productive. Mr. Pratt supposed, when he wrote to Mrs. Brooke, soliciting the pleasure of waiting on her, that he had addressed Mrs. Brooke, the fair author of “*Julia Mandeville*,” “*Emily Montague*,” and the musical afterpiece of “*Rosina*,” the music of which was chiefly composed by my late friend Mr. Shield. On the first interview, at which I was present, he was informed of his mistake, but the good sense and pleasing manners of Mrs. Brooke induced him to cultivate the acquaintance, and I passed many instructive and pleasing hours in his company, till at length we became intimately connected. I afterward met him frequently at the house of the celebrated Mrs. Robinson, whom I shall mention in the course of these records. Though his works in general are of a sentimental and pathetic description, yet in company he displayed great humour, and abounded in ludicrous anecdotes. I introduced him to Dr. Wolcot, whose original and peculiar genius he highly admired. They became intimate, and the collision of their powers furnished a very pleasant intellectual repast. Mr. Pratt was not born to fortune, and was, therefore, obliged to make his way in the world by his literary talents. Whether he was a classical scholar I know not, but from his intimacy with Mr. Potter, the translator of the “*Grecian Drama*,” and with the present Dr. Mavor, in conjunction with whom he published some works, as well as with Mr. Gibbon the historian, it may be inferred that he had a competent knowledge of classical literature. It is certain that he possessed no ordinary talents as a poet, and as a novel-writer, of which there are abundant proofs in his various and numerous productions. His first dramatic piece was a tragedy, entitled “*The Fair Circassian*,” the title of a poem written by Dr. Croxall, which was much admired. The plot of this tragedy is not, however, founded upon the poem, but on Dr. Hawkesworth’s interesting romance of “*Almorán and Hamet*.” Dr. Hawkesworth was another of Pratt’s intimate friends. Mrs. Barry was to have been the heroine of the play, but one of those caprices to which great theatrical performers are peculiarly subject, occurred, and it was assigned to Miss Farren, the late Countess of Derby. It was, I believe, her first appearance on Drury-lane, boards, at least in a tragic character; but her natural good temper and her friendship for the author, induced her to undertake the part without hesitation. The play, as far as I recollect, was represented nine nights, and therefore produced a tolerable requital to the author.

My old friend Mr. James Sayers, well known for his literary



talents as a caricaturist, made a ludicrous drawing of Miss Farren in the heroine, and published a print of it etched by himself. He also made a drawing of Mrs. Abington, in the character of Scrub, which she degraded herself by performing on one of her benefit nights. Mr. Sayers was so well known and so much admired for his knowledge and talents, that I must pay a short tribute to his memory. He was an attorney, and in partnership with another in Gray's-inn, but his partner was so fond of angling that he neglected all business to indulge himself in his favourite diversion, and Mr. Sayers deemed it proper to dissolve the connexion. Mr. Sayers was remarkable for a saturnine humour, and for his fertility and promptitude in sarcastic verses, as well for his skill in caricature drawings, which he engraved himself, and they constitute a very large collection. Many of them he presented to me, but I believe very few persons possess the whole collection. He was a very shrewd man, a warm politician, and a zealous Pittite. His most popular print was published at the time when Mr. Fox brought forward his memorable East India Bill, after his coalition with Lord North, which destroyed the reputation of both for political integrity. This print, which displayed great ingenuity and humour, represented Mr. Fox as *Carlo Khan* astride an elephant, the face of which had the features of Lord North, riding in Leadenhall-street near the East India House. Mr. Sayers published many other prints on political subjects, and all in favour of the Pitt administration. He was an intimate friend of the Boydells, and selected many of the subjects for the artists when those enterprising patrons of painting, in conjunction with my late worthy friend Mr. George Nicol, the bookseller to his majesty, instituted the Shakspeare Gallery in Pall Mall.

On the death of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Sayers published a poem intitled "Elijah's Mantle," which was very popular at the time, and has since been erroneously attributed to Mr. Canning. The fertile imagination of Mr. Sayers, and his sarcastic humour, remained unexhausted till his death. One of his last publications was an heroic epistle to Mr. Winsor, the celebrated founder of the Gas Company, but who, for reasons which have not been satisfactorily explained, was precluded from the profits of his science and ingenuity. This poem abounded in wit, humour, and satire, and might fairly be compared with the memorable heroic epistle to Sir William Chambers, the author of which, like Junius, has never been discovered, but is now generally supposed to have been Mr. Mason, though so essentially different from all that gentleman's acknowledged productions, as to render the question doubtful with all critics of real judgment, taste, and acuteness.

I knew Mr. Sayers in early life, and nothing interrupted our friendship. The last time I had the pleasure of seeing him was at a dinner in Staple-inn Hall. He was a member of the society of that inn of court, and I had often the pleasure of dining with him at the same social board. He was usually very reserved at table; and the rest of the members, who highly respected his character and enjoyed his conversation, left him to retain his own humour. As I knew his

powers, and wished to draw him forth, I always ventured to attack him with sportive hostility, in order to provoke him into action; and I generally succeeded. I well knew that I was likely to suffer under so powerful an opponent, but I induced him to come forward with sallies highly gratifying to the company, and not less so to myself, for, if I suffered, I profited by the display of his intellectual energy and satirical humour.

He never could resist the opportunity of indulging his turn for ridicule. I remember meeting him one morning at the house of our mutual friend the late Mr. John Kemble, just after the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, one of my oldest and most esteemed friends, had exhibited his fine whole-length portrait of that great actor, in the character of Hamlet philosophizing on the skull of Yorick. Mr. Sayers had made a drawing in ridicule of that picture. The drawing displayed much point and humour. Mr. Kemble asked to look at it; and when it came into his hands, having a sincere friendship for Lawrence, he instantly placed it in his table-drawer, and told Mr. Sayers that he should never see it again, as a punishment for his attack on a work of great merit. I understood, however, that Mr. Sayers really intended to present the drawing to Mr. Kemble. The society of Staple-inn suffered a great loss in the death of Mr. Sayers, an event that was to me a subject of sincere regret.

But I must return to Mr. Pratt. I am convinced that his heart was kind, benevolent, and friendly, though, as he subsisted wholly by his literary talents, I am afraid he was often under pecuniary embarrassments. He had tried the stage, and performed the characters of Philaster and Hamlet, at Covent Garden Theatre; but though, no doubt, he supported both with "due emphasis and discretion," yet his walk was a kind of airy swing that rendered his acting at times rather ludicrous, as I have heard, for his performance took place long before I was acquainted with him.

I was sorry, and indeed shocked, to see a letter from Miss Seward in the second volume of Mr. Polwhele's Memoirs, in which she gives a very severe account of the character and conduct of Mr. Pratt, after having been on the most friendly terms with him for many years. When Mr. Pratt first published his poem entitled "Sympathy," a work characterized by benevolence and poetry, she wrote an elaborate and most favourable commentary upon it, though she afterward thought proper to drop the connexion, and to revile its author in the grave. Even admitting that there might be some foundation for what she alleges against him, she must have been fully aware of it before she became his friendly commentator. Miss Seward, however, was one of the last persons who should have assumed the office of a severe and moral censor, as it is well known that she suffered the attentions of a public singer, a married man, who resided with his family at Lichfield, and was in the habit of receiving him almost daily. Admitting also that the connexion was innocent, and I have no reason to suppose that it was otherwise, surely it was acting in contempt of public opinion to withdraw a man from his duty to his wife and family.



It may be said of Miss Seward, 'as a writer of prose or poetry, that she "inclination fondly took for taste."' Her poems are stiff and formal, and a great part of her literary reputation arose from the encomiums which Mr. Pratt bestowed on her, and on the kindness with which he brought her name forward to public notice. Her first production was a monody on the unfortunate Major André, who was executed as a spy in America during our lamentable contest with our former transatlantic colonies. It was not recommended by any original merit or poetical vigour, and the same may be said of all her subsequent productions, and her attempts at criticism are vain, weak, and affected. Mr. Pratt, who had really a sincere friendship for Miss Seward, deeply regretted the cessation of their amicable intercourse, and earnestly desired to know how he had offended her, but never could obtain a satisfactory answer. Little could he conceive it possible that in cold-blooded enmity she would have waited till his death to revile his memory.

I am convinced that if Pratt had been born to a fortune, a great part of it would have been devoted to benevolence. He had written a copious account of his own life in two large volumes, of which he had made an abstract, and this he gave me to read at his lodgings, while he was writing something for the press which waited for him.

In the early part of his life he had been in America, but in what employment I do not remember. I suppose he gave public recitations, as he afterward did at Edinburgh, Bath, and Dublin. He was for some time a curate in Lincolnshire, but tired of that occupation, he devoted himself entirely to the profession of an author. He excelled in epistolary composition. His second dramatic work was intitled "The School for Vanity," which owed its failure chiefly to the great number of letters that passed between the several characters in the play addressed to each other, insomuch that when the last letter was presented, the audience burst into a general laugh, and the piece was hurried to a conclusion, and I believe never brought forward again. In fact, he lived amid epistolary correspondents, and transferred his habits to the stage. This comedy he included in the four volumes of miscellanies which he afterward published. As he was once a popular writer, he must have derived great profits from his numerous works, but was sometimes in difficulties. Once, when he had just received twenty pounds unexpectedly, and had doubtless full occasion for that sum, having observed that I appeared grave, and, as he thought, melancholy, in company with three sisters whom we were frequently in the habit of visiting, and with whom I was generally in high spirits, he conceived that my apparent dejection resulted from some pecuniary pressure, and the next day he offered me his twenty pounds, telling me that all he requested was as early a return as convenient, his own situation exposing him to the mortification of pressing applications. He was totally mistaken as to the cause of my gravity. He was sometime in partnership with Mr. Clinch, a bookseller, at Bath, but preferring the writing to the vending of books, he relinquished the concern. When I first became



acquainted with him, he was in the habit of gratifying the company with recitations from the poets, which he gave with impressive effect; but latterly, the violent expression and energy of his delivery rendered it harsh and almost ludicrous. Poor Pratt! he was one of my earliest literary friends, and I cannot but feel much pleasure in the opportunity of rescuing his character from the relentless rancour of Miss Seward's posthumous defamation.

The celebrated Angelica Kauffman, who was a friend of Mr. Pratt, presented drawings to him for the illustrations of some of his works. This lady I never had the pleasure of seeing, but by all accounts her person was highly interesting, and her manners and accomplishments were peculiarly attractive. It is said that Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was thoroughly acquainted with human nature, and never likely to be deceived in his estimate of individuals, was so much attached to her that he solicited her hand. It appeared, however, that she refused him, as she was attached to the late Sir Nathaniel Holland, then Mr. Dance, an eminent painter, whose portrait of Garrick, in the character of Richard the Third, is the best and most spirited representation of that unrivalled actor that ever appeared, though all the most distinguished artists of the time employed themselves on the same admirable subject. The correspondence that had taken place between Mrs. Kauffman and Mr. Dance became known, and was thought to be of a very interesting description, insomuch that his majesty George the Third, who generally heard of any thing worth attention, requested Mr. Dance would permit him to peruse the letters that had passed between them during their courtship. What put a period to an intercourse which, being founded upon mutual attachment, held forth so favourable a prospect of mutual happiness, has never been developed, and is only matter of conjecture. Mrs. Kauffman, after the termination of this promising courtship, went abroad, and was unfortunately deluded into a marriage with a common footman, in Germany, who had assumed a title, and appeared to be a person of high rank and affluence. Mrs. Kauffman, it is said, by the intervention of friends had recourse to legal authorities, was enabled to separate from the impostor, but did not return to this country, and died a few years after, having never recovered her spirits after the shock of so degrading an alliance. It is not a little surprising that a lady so intelligent and accomplished should have been the victim of such a deception.

The end of Mr. Pratt was lamentable. He resided for a short time before his death at Birmingham, and was thrown from his horse. He suffered severe contusions by the fall. A fever ensued, which in a few days deprived him of life.

## CHAPTER VI.

AMONG those persons with whom I became acquainted at the apartments of Mrs. Brooke, was Mr. Henry Griffith, one of the authors of the *Letters of Henry and Frances*, which were published in six volumes. These letters are of a romantic description, and perhaps abound with more quotations than are to be found in any other English work, except Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, though those in the latter are much more learned; still the lovers of either sex, who may require extracts from the poets and other authors to strengthen their gallant effusions, can hardly apply to a more ample storehouse than to the *Letters of Henry and Frances*. The heroine of the correspondence was, I believe, Mr. Griffith's cousin, to whom he was married, and from all I heard, they were a happy couple. They were both authors by profession. His literary compositions were chiefly written for magazines and newspapers, but I know not if he ever put his name to any of them. His wife displayed her literary powers with success. Her comedy of "*The School for Rakes*" was well received by the public, and had the advantage of being supported by the whole comic strength of the Drury-lane company during the management of Garrick. The chief performer was Reddish, who was a very respectable actor at that time, but who, when not much past the prime of life, became insane, and never recovered. I saw him in St. Luke's Hospital, and found him flattering himself that he should be able to resume his profession, and fulfil his engagement with the manager of Covent Garden Theatre. It was lamentable to observe the alteration in his person, manners, and attire. The change in the former might easily be accounted for, as he was necessarily confined to spare diet. He always dressed in his sane state like a gentleman, but in Bedlam he had all the tinsel finery of a strolling actor, or what is styled "shabby genteel." He seemed to be drinking a bowl of milk, which, though several visitors were present, he appeared eagerly to gobble like a hungry rustic.

His insanity took place soon after an unlucky occurrence at Covent Garden, the first night of his engagement. He appeared in the part of Hamlet, and in the fencing scene between him and Laertes, Whitfield, who performed the latter character, made so clumsy a lunge, that he struck off the bagwig of Hamlet, and exposed his bald pate to the laughter of the audience. In conversing with him in Bedlam, I soothed him by telling him that I was present at the scene, and that though the accident had a risible effect, the audience knew the fault was wholly to be ascribed to the awkwardness of his competitor. The mortification, however, made so strong an impression on his mind, that he never appeared on the stage again, and, I heard, ended his days in the infirmary at York. He was the



second husband of Mrs. Canning, the mother of our late eminent statesman Mr. George Canning. He distinguished himself chiefly in the characters of Edgar, Posthumus, and Henry the Sixth in the play of "Richard the Third." Poor Reddish!

The next friend of my father, whose memory I cherish with respect and affection, was William Donaldson, Esq. He was, I understood, the son of a gentleman of the bedchamber to King George the Second, but I have since been informed that such a situation was not likely to be occupied by a person unallied to nobility. That his father was a gentleman, and in good circumstances, is highly probable, as the son had partly received his education abroad, and was deemed a good Latin and French scholar. He had passed the meridian of life when I first knew him, though he had long been intimate with my father. His friendship for the latter induced him to give me an encouraging reception at his house on Turnham Green, which was always open to me when I could spare a few days, and my father did not require my assistance in his profession; and I was always rejoiced at the opportunity of passing my time with so amiable and intelligent a man. My opinion of Mr. Donaldson's merits is supported by that of my friend Sir William Beechey, who knew him at an earlier period than I did, and who, being older and more experienced than myself, was better qualified to decide upon his character. There was a variety, intelligence, and spirit in his conversation, which I have seldom found in persons who have been more distinguished in the world, and admired for their convivial powers and store of anecdotes, particularly as he excelled in the imitation of foreign manners and languages, which enabled him to give a strong effect to every thing he said. He bought two houses at Turnham Green, one of which he occupied himself, and the other he let to Lucy Cooper, a lady more celebrated for wit and beauty than for chastity. She was distinguished in the regions of promiscuous gallantry at the time when Fanny Murray and Kitty Fisher were her chief rivals in the circles of dissipation.

I will leave Mr. Donaldson for a few moments, as I write only from recollection, lest I should forget what might never recur to me. Lucy Cooper, the fair but faded tenant of Mr. Donaldson, I remember to have seen once, and she appeared to me to retain the traces of a face not strikingly handsome, but exhibiting nevertheless an expression of interesting languor. Her figure had probably been of the middle size, and her manner appeared to indicate the lady, with a softness bordering upon dejection. At this time she had for many years retired from what may be styled *public life*, and, with an annuity that enabled her to live comfortably, had fixed her residence at Turnham Green. She was reputed to be a woman of more understanding than her fair rivals above mentioned, but with less of *l'usage du monde*. Knowing how uncertain are the wages of profligacy, she had, as I was informed, been anxious to prepare against the decay of beauty, and secure an independence against the winter of life. While she was under the *protection*, as it is styled, of a young nobleman of



great fortune, after he had been pouring forth vows of eternal attachment, like Prior's Celadon to his Celia, Lucy Cooper thought it a good opportunity for her to try to induce him to settle upon her some permanent provision, and with a melancholy softness, adverting to the uncertainty of her situation, she asked him, if, after such an avowal of his fondness and unalterable constancy, he could bear to see her sink into poverty in age. The romance of the lover was over in a moment, and he coolly answered, "No, for by G— I would not then see you at all." Lucy used to relate this incident with a smile, and with a sarcastic compliment to the fidelity of man.

During her residence at Turnham Green, a young good-looking man lived in the house with her, whose name was Richardson. He assumed the appearance of a clergyman, and being inoffensive in his manners, and considered as her relation, he was admitted into a club at the Packhorse, opposite to Mr. Donaldson's house. Dr. Wolcot, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Jessé Foot, and myself, were afterward members of the same club, and also Dr. Griffith, the founder of "The Monthly Review." Lucy Cooper died after a lingering illness of some years. Richardson was then thrown upon the world, and soon after left the place. What became of him was not known, but having a good memory, I many years after recognised him in the capacity of a foreman at a woollen-draper's on Snow-hill. Not long after, I saw him at the head of a cook's shop in Newgate-street, slicing the beef for casual customers. His next transformation was into a butcher, opposite to Gray's-inn-lane, Holborn; and finally, I saw him with a basket, lined with a clean napkin, parading the streets with country pork and poultry. I heard that he afterward became a baker, in King-street, Seven Dials.

The last time I ever saw him was under the gateway leading from Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, to the churchyard, where we had both sought shelter from the rain. I saw evidently that he had recognised me through all his vicissitudes, as the juvenile visitor to Mr. Donaldson; and as he stood near me, and looked at me with the utmost diffidence, as if subdued by misfortune, though decently attired, I entered into conversation with him, and he reminded me that he had often seen me since what he styled his happier days. I then observed that I had formerly supposed him to be a clergyman, and asked him if he had ever been a member of the church, merely to make him think that I viewed him with respect. He seemed gratified to talk with one who had seen him in better times, and told me that he came from a good family, that he was once a linen-draper, with a prosperous business in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square, but that keeping a saddle-horse, and aspiring beyond the rank of a tradesman, he had become a bankrupt, and, to secure himself from actual want, had formed a connexion with Lucy Cooper, who could leave him nothing at her death but good-will and kind wishes. He was obviously much affected when he spoke of the lady. He made no application for pecuniary assistance, nor, by his appearance at that time, did he seem to require it. It is probable, however, that

he underwent many other vicissitudes. He must be very old if still alive, but I hope he has been released from the caprices of fortune and the miseries of life,—miseries from which pride, wealth, and folly, as well as guilt, cannot escape in this world of universal trouble.

I now return to Mr. Donaldson. He was the nephew of Mr. Wood, a gentleman who held a high post at the custom-house, and who wrote an answer to Lord Bolingbroke with so much candour and good sense, that the noble philosopher desired to be acquainted with him. In one of his visits to his lordship at Battersea, he took young Donaldson with him. Mr. Donaldson told me he never saw so expressive a face as that of Lord Bolingbroke, and when his lordship looked at him, his eyes were so penetrating that he felt quite abashed. Whether Mr. Wood's book was on political or philosophical topics, I do not remember. Mr. Wood, in order to keep his nephew out of harm's way, employed him for a few hours every day at the custom-house. He lodged in the same house with his uncle in Chancery-lane.

What induced Mr. Donaldson to visit Ireland at a later period, I know not. He there, however, became acquainted with a very fine woman, who proved in time an excellent actress: this was the celebrated Mrs. Yates, who then went by the name of Miss Graham. Mr. Donaldson was a handsome man, and it is by no means surprising that his person, intelligent mind, and sprightly conversation, should have made an impression on Miss Graham, and that he should have been captivated by her fine figure and beautiful face. Mr. Thomas Sheridan, the father of my old friend Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was then a young man, and though of a grave character, was probably not insensible to the charms of a fine woman, and at that time, perhaps, there was not a finer than Miss Graham. She was to accompany Mr. Sheridan to England, and he had promised to endeavour to procure for her a situation on the London stage. When Miss Graham arrived in London, she attached herself wholly to Mr. Donaldson, who had returned to England, though not without some regard to appearance; but they might be said to live together about two years. What put a stop to this intercourse I know not, but it is not improbable that Mr. Yates, one of the best comic actors of his time, had paid honourable addresses to Miss Graham, and that they were soon afterward married.

Beautiful as she was, she did not rise into eminence as an actress for many years, and then accidentally, as Mr. Murphy states in his "Life of Garrick." Mr. Murphy had presented his tragedy of "The Orphan of China" to Mr. Garrick, who had accepted it, and the heroine of the piece was assigned to Mrs. Cibber; but that actress, like those who think themselves without a rival, would not decide whether she should condescend to act the part, but kept the author and manager in suspense. Finally, she pleaded ill health, and refused it. Mrs. Yates, whom the author had first preferred on account of the superior grandeur of her person, had been prepared for the part, in order to provide against the illness or hesitating pride of Mrs. Cibber, and



she performed it so well, that she at once established her reputation as a first-rate actress, and after the death of Mrs. Cibber had no rival, till Mr. Barry brought Mrs. Dancer to London, who then divided with her the female part of the theatrical empire. Mrs. Yates had passed the meridian of life when I first saw her, but she had still fine remains of her former beauty, and was an excellent actress, though chiefly in tragedy.

According to Mr. Donaldson's account, there was a remarkable change in the temper of Mrs. Yates after her rise to distinction. He said that while she resided with him she was meek, diffident, and timid; but he heard that when she had risen to popularity she became imperious, overbearing, and arrogant. Such is too often the effect of power, though, perhaps, the mortifying consciousness of declining beauty might contribute to sour her temper. He told me that after he had been some years in Jamaica, and had returned to this country, as he was walking through the Haymarket, a lady in a carriage saluted him with great earnestness, and eagerly repeated her friendly greetings. As the carriage was too distant for him to recognise the lady, he merely raised his hat. Finding that she was not known, and inferring, as he afterward conceived, that her person must have undergone a great change for the worse, she sunk back in the carriage with evident dejection. The gentleman in the carriage with her then projected his head, in order to see to whom her eager salutations were directed, and that gentleman was Mr. Yates, who at once enabled Mr. Donaldson to discover in the unknown fair one the object of his youthful admiration.

Mr. Donaldson, in the early part of his life, married Miss Faulkener, then a celebrated singer at Marylebone Gardens. He was of a party of pleasure in a journey to Richmond by water. Every thing was provided for dinner on board of the vessel, and Miss Faulkener delighted the company so much by her musical powers, but particularly Mr. Donaldson, that he paid court to her, and being a handsome and sprightly man, soon gained her affections, and they were married. As Mr. Donaldson, in our frequent walks from Turnham Green to Richmond and London, informed me of most of the particulars of his life; I thought it strange that he never mentioned his marriage to me; and all that my father or I ever knew of it was derived from the information of Mr. Peter Bardin, a respectable actor at the Goodman's Fields theatre, at the time when Garrick burst upon the world with a blaze of excellence that has never since been equalled. Mr. Bardin is mentioned in the *History of the Stage*, in which it is stated that he had offended the audience so much that he deemed it necessary to quit the theatre. Chetwood does not relate the nature of the offence. Bardin then became the manager of a provincial company of actors, and finally went to his native country, Ireland. When Barry first brought Mrs. Dancer to London, Bardin accompanied them, and they all performed at the theatre in the Haymarket, where I saw them when very young. Barry in *King Lear*, Mrs. Dancer as *Cordelia*, and Bardin as *Gloucester*. Bardin was an intimate friend



of Mr. Donaldson, and informed my father and myself that he not only kept up his connexion with Mr. Donaldson, but with his wife also, after their separation, as he had been their friend while they lived in conjugal happiness.

According to Mr. Bardin's account, Mrs. Donaldson was obliged to fulfil her engagement as a singer at Marylebone Gardens, and during her performance, the Earl of Halifax was so charmed by her musical powers that he actually fainted with ecstasy. He soon became acquainted with her, and withdrew her from the protection of her husband. Mr. Bardin said that Mr. Donaldson at first determined to send a challenge to his lordship, but, being persuaded from putting his life in hazard for a woman whom he could never receive again without discredit to himself, he acquiesced in the opinion of his friends. Though possessed of the means of living like a gentleman, in order to dissipate the gloom arising from the infidelity of a beloved wife, he procured the situation of secretary to the government of Jamaica. Sir Henry Moore was then governor of the island, and Mr. Donaldson was admitted into his private friendship as well as to his official confidence. Mr. Donaldson always spoke of Sir Henry Moore with high respect and regard. Sir Henry first told the story of Monsieur Tonson to Mr. Donaldson, from whom I learned it, and was in the habit of repeating it to my friends in prose; but when Messrs. Fawcett, Holman, and Pope were giving readings and recitations at Freemasons' Hall, by their desire I versified it, and Mr. Fawcett delivered it with so much character and humour as to render it more popular than it could have been from any intrinsic merits. Mr. Donaldson gave the tale with admirable effect in prose, and when I complimented him on it, he assured me that he did not approach the humorous manner in which he had heard it recited by Sir Henry Moore. Having acquired a competent fortune, Mr. Donaldson returned to this country, resided some years in Craven-street, and finally retired to Turnham Green, where my father first introduced me to him, and I found in him a "guide, philosopher, and friend," during many of the happiest days of my life. It is proper to mention that Mr. Johnson, the author of "The Adventures of a Guinea," in another of his works, giving an account of the connexion between Lord Halifax and Mrs. Donaldson, states that his lordship procured the appointment for Mr. Donaldson as a compensation for the loss of his wife; but Mr. Bardin, who knew all the circumstances of the affair, and had no interest in concealing the truth from my father, stated the matter as I have related it. And if I may believe Mrs. Rudd, Mr. Johnson was not a writer on whose veracity any dependence could be placed. I shall have occasion to mention him again.

When Mr. Donaldson was in Jamaica, he became acquainted with the celebrated Constantia Phillips, then an old woman. This lady in her early days had been married to a Dutch merchant, named Muilman, who afterward deserted her, and left her to support herself in the best way she could. She was a woman of great sense

and accomplishments, and became acquainted with many of the higher ranks of noblemen in this country. The great Lord Chesterfield, if he may be so styled, thought so favourably of her talents, that he advised her to write "The Economy of Female Life," as a sort of companion to Mr. Dodsley's excellent work "The Economy of Human Life." Constantia Phillips, at the time when Mr. Donaldson knew her in Jamaica, was married to a hair-dresser. She originally went to that island with Mr. Needham, who possessed great property there, and was well known in the fashionable circles of London. She told Mr. Donaldson that, of all her admirers, she was most attached to Mr. Needham. I shall have occasion to mention this gentleman again, and therefore now take leave of Constantia Phillips. It is a melancholy reflection, that a woman so well qualified to adorn private life, even in the most polished circles of fashion, and who might have furnished an impressive example to her sex, should have been induced, or rather reduced, to accept the hand of a worthless Dutchman, and to become by his desertion the victim of misfortune, misery, and disgrace.

It appears strange to me, considering the many hours I passed with Mr. Donaldson alone, as he communicated to me most of the circumstances of his life, that he never touched upon the subject of his marriage with Miss Faulkener; but as nothing can be more humiliating to a man than the desertion of his wife, it is probable that pride and resentment kept him silent.

Mr. Donaldson told me that once having betted twenty pounds on a horse at Newmarket, he won, but at the end of the race could not find the person who had lost. Returning to London the next day, his post-chaise was stopped by a highwayman, whom he immediately recognised as the loser of the day before. He addressed the highwayman as follows: "Sir, I will give you all I have about me if you will pay me the twenty pounds which I won of you yesterday at Newmarket." The man instantly spurred his horse, and was off in a moment. It is somewhat strange that, soon after Mr. Donaldson landed in Jamaica, he saw the same man in a coffee-house. He approached him, and in a whisper reminded him of his loss at Newmarket; the man rushed out of the room, and, according to report, went to the Blue Mountains, and was never heard of again.

Mr. Donaldson was in real danger from another highwayman, who was celebrated in his day, and known as a fashionable man by the name of MacLaine. This man came from Ireland, and made a splendid figure for some time; but as his means of support were not known, he was generally considered as a doubtful character. He was by all accounts a tall, showy, good-looking man, and a frequent visitor at Button's Coffee-house, founded, as is well known, by Addison, in favour of an old servant of the Warwick family, but never visited by him when driven from his home by the ill-humour of his wife; he then resorted to Will's, on the opposite side of the same street, that he might not be reminded of domestic anxieties. Button's was on the south side of Russell-street, Covent Garden; and Will's in the



same street, at the corner of Bow-street. Button's became a private house, and Mrs. Inchbald lodged there. Mr. Donaldson, observing that Maclaine paid particular attention to the bar-maid, the daughter of the landlord, gave a hint to the father of Maclaine's dubious character. The father cautioned his daughter against the addresses of Maclaine, and imprudently told her by whose advice he put her on her guard; she as imprudently told Maclaine. The next time Donaldson visited the coffee-room, and was sitting in one of the boxes, Maclaine entered, and in a loud tone said, "Mr. Donaldson, I wish to *spake* to you in a private room." Mr. Donaldson being unarmed, and naturally afraid of being alone with such a man, said in answer, that, as nothing could pass between them that he did not wish the whole world to know, he begged leave to decline the invitation. "Very well," said Maclaine, as he left the room, "we shall *mate* again." A day or two after, as Mr. Donaldson was walking near Richmond in the evening, he saw Maclaine on horseback, who, on perceiving him, spurred the animal, and was rapidly approaching him; fortunately, at that moment a gentleman's carriage appeared in view, when Maclaine immediately turned his horse towards the carriage, and Donaldson hurried into the protection of Richmond as fast as possible. But for the appearance of the carriage, which presented better prey, it is probable that Maclaine would have shot Mr. Donaldson immediately. Maclaine a short time after committed a highway robbery, was tried, found guilty, and hanged at Tyburn. The public prints at the time, I understand, were full of accounts of this gentleman highwayman, and I remember the following two stanzas of a song that was current at the time—

Ye Smarts and ye Jemmies, ye Ramillie beaux,  
With golden cock'd hats and with silver-laced clothes,  
Who by wit and invention your pockets maintain,  
Come pity the fate of poor Jemmy Maclaine.

Derry down.

He robb'd folks genteelly, he robb'd with an air,  
He robb'd them so well that he always took care  
My lord was not hurt, and my lady not frighted;  
And instead of being hang'd he deserv'd to be knighted.

Derry down.

Mr. Donaldson was considered a good scholar. In the earlier part of his life he published a kind of novel, entitled "The Life and Adventures of Sir Bartholomew Sapsull," obviously in the manner of that contemptible, nauseous, and obscene rhapsody, *Tristram Shandy*.\* Mr. Donaldson's novel savours too much in some places

\* The author of "The Reverie, or a Flight to the Paradise of Fools," also the author of "The Adventures of a Guinea," a man of taste and judgment, mentioning Sterne in the former work, says, "He was raised by the success of what he wrote some time ago, of which it may be difficult to determine whether its merit lay in its oddity, its obscenity, or its profaneness. However, the thing took with the public taste in an extraordinary manner. The novelty that recommended it being worn off, there was little or no notice taken of it. Besides, he had exhausted the



of its vicious archetype, but contains shrewd observations on human life, interspersed with sound political suggestions and allusions, more especially remarks on the important subject of agriculture, which he afterward expanded into a work entitled "Agriculture considered as a moral and political duty." Lord Kaimes commended this work in one of his later publications, but was wholly unacquainted with the author. Mr. Donaldson lived long enough to despise his juvenile novel, and to regret that he had ever written it.

In his latter years he employed himself in an historical work, which he entitled "Portraits of the Kings of England," parts of which he condescended to read to me, thinking more favourably of me than I can presume to imagine that I had deserved. As far as I could venture to form an opinion at the time, and from what I can still recollect, they appear to me to have shown an impartial examination of the characters and conduct of the respective monarchs, and also to have comprised a just, but unpretending history of the country. He had collected ample materials from the best authorities, and I cannot doubt that his work, when completed, would have been a valuable addition to British literature. He published a few numbers of a periodical work entitled "The Reformer," intended as a vindication of the measures of government against the attacks of the opposition. This must have been a disinterested work, as he was easy in his circumstances, devoted to literary retirement, and wholly unconnected with ministers, but strongly attached to his majesty George the Third. On the death of the mother of that monarch, Mr. Donaldson wrote an elegy, in which he reviled her enemies, and discountenanced all the opprobrious insinuations of her alleged intimacy with his majesty's favourite northern minister.

Mr. Owen Ruffhead, who published the Statutes at large, and wrote the life of Pope, from materials furnished by Bishop Warburton, was one of Mr. Donaldson's most intimate friends. Mr. Donaldson described him as so plain a man, and with only one eye, that when he entered a room, every one was disposed to exclaim, "What an ugly man!" but when he joined in conversation, his voice was so sweet, and his manners so very engaging, that all seemed inclined to fall in love with him. It is somewhat strange that Mr. Owen Ruffhead should have been so conversant with the dry study of law, and yet have displayed such a taste for literature as appears in his Life of Pope. Mr. Donaldson spoke high of his moral character. I knew a sister of Mr. Ruffhead. She was the wife of one of the officers of Chelsea Hospital, and she retained such an affection for him, that though he had been dead nearly forty years, the sense of her loss deeply affected her whenever he was mentioned. Mr. Bentley, who supplied the graphic illustrations to Gray's poem, lived at Turnham

spirit of obscenity and profaneness in the first parts, that there remained nothing for him now but dregs, too coarse for the grossest taste." Such was the opinion of an enlightened writer on "Tristram Shandy," and I heartily wish that my humble concurrence were of force sufficient to bring the fantastic folly into universal contempt.

Green, and was also an intimate friend of Mr. Donaldson. Dr. Griffiths, the founder of "The Monthly Review," a man of great experience, and a good judge of mankind, used to characterize Donaldson and Bentley as "the eyes of Turnham Green." Mr. Donaldson was often a gratuitous contributor to "The Monthly Review." The "luminaries," however, would have been a more appropriate designation, as the eyes only see, but the others irradiate.

I will now state a few recollections of what I have heard from Mr. Donaldson, and then take a final leave of him. He told me that he was acquainted with a colonel, whose moral worth and scholastic attainments recommended him to the honour of being appointed tutor to one of the young princes. This gentleman had two sons of the most depraved character. The father had in vain endeavoured to reform them by precept, exhortation, and example. They both became highwaymen; one was taken, convicted of robbery, and ordered for execution. The brother went to see him in Newgate the night before the dreadful penalty of the law was to be enforced, and finding the culprit in the agonies of despair, after attempting to console him in the usual manner, suddenly exclaimed, "Why do you snivel in this cowardly manner, when you must know that I shall meet you in hell next sessions?" The fate of the wretched man had no effect upon the surviving profligate, whose flagitious career, a few weeks after, terminated in the same disastrous way. The father soon after resigned his employment, and sunk into the grave with unappeasable dejection.

What the religious principles of Mr. Donaldson were, I never knew, but I am sure he had too manly a mind to give way to superstition. The following circumstance, however, he told me as a fact in which he placed full confidence, on account of the character of the gentleman who related it. The latter was a particular friend of his, and a member of parliament. In order to attend the House of Commons, he had taken apartments in St. Anne's church-yard, Westminster. On the evening when he took possession, he was struck with something that appeared to him mysterious in the manner of the maid-servant, who looked like a man disguised, and he felt a very unpleasant emotion. This feeling was strengthened by a similar deportment in the mistress of the house, who soon after entered his room, and asked him if he wanted any thing before he retired to rest: disliking her manner, he soon dismissed her, and went to bed, but the disagreeable impression made on his mind by the maid and mistress kept him long awake; at length, however, he fell asleep. During his sleep he dreamed that the corpse of a gentleman, who had been murdered, was deposited in the cellar of the house. This dream co-operating with the unfavourable, or rather repulsive countenances and demeanour of the two women, precluded all hopes of renewed sleep, and it being the summer season, he arose about five o'clock in the morning, took his hat, and resolved to quit a house of such alarm and terror. To his surprise, as he was leaving it, he met the mistress in the entry, dressed, as if she had never gone to bed,



She seemed to be much agitated, and inquired his reason for wishing to go out so early in the morning. He hesitated a moment with increased alarm, and then told her that he expected a friend, who was to arrive by a stage in Bishopsgate-street, and that he was going to meet him. He was suffered to go out of the house, and when revived by the open air, he felt, as he afterward declared, as if relieved from impending destruction. He stated that in a few hours after, he returned with a friend to whom he had told his dream, and the impression made on him by the maid and the mistress; he, however, only laughed at him for his superstitious terrors, but on entering the house, they found that it was deserted, and calling in a gentleman who was accidentally passing, they all descended to the cellar, and actually found a corpse in the state which the gentleman's dream had represented.

Before I make any observations on the subject, I shall introduce a recital of a similar description, and care not if skepticism sneer, or ridicule deride, satisfied that I heard it from one on whose veracity I could most confidently depend. I will, however, now take leave of Mr. Donaldson, though I could with pleasure dwell much longer on the memory of so valuable a friend.

The other extraordinary story to which I have alluded, I heard from what I consider unimpeachable authority. Mrs. Brooke, whom I have already mentioned, told me that she was drinking tea one evening in Fleet-street, where a medical gentleman was expected, but did not arrive till late. Apologizing for his delay, he said he had attended a lady who suffered under a contracted throat, which occasioned her great difficulty in swallowing. She said that she traced the cause to the following circumstance. When she was a young woman, and in bed with her mother, she dreamed that she was on the roof of a church, struggling with a man who attempted to throw her over. He appeared in a carman's frock, and had red hair. Her mother ridiculed her terrors, and bade her compose herself to sleep again, but the impression of her dream was so strong, that she could not comply. In the evening of the following day, she had appointed to meet her lover at a bowling-green, from which he was to conduct her home when the amusement ended. She had passed over one field in hopes of meeting the gentleman, and sung as she tripped along, when she entered the second field, and accidentally turning her head, she beheld, in the corner of the field, just such a man as her dream represented, dressed in a cartman's frock, with red hair, and apparently approaching towards her. Her agitation was so great, that she ran with all her speed to the stile of the third field, and with difficulty got over it. Fatigued, however, with running, she sat on the stile to recover herself, and reflecting that the man might be harmless, she was afraid that her flight on seeing him might put evil and vindictive thoughts into his head. While in this meditation, the man had reached the stile, and seizing her by the neck, he dragged her over the stile, and she remembered no more. It appeared that he had pulled off all her clothes, and thrown her into an adjoining

ditch. Fortunately, a gentleman came to the spot, and observing a body above the water, he hailed others who were approaching, and it was immediately raised. It was evidently not dead, and some of the party remarking that the robber could not be far off, went in pursuit of him, leaving others to guard and endeavour to revive the body. The pursuers went different ways, and some, at no great distance, saw a man at a public-house sitting with a bundle before him. He seemed to be so much alarmed at the sight of the gentlemen, that they suspected him to be the culprit, and determined to examine the bundle, in which they found the dress of the lady, which some of them recognised. The man was, of course, immediately taken into custody, and was to be brought to trial at the approaching assizes. The lady, however, was too ill to come into court, but appearances were so strong against him that he was kept in close custody, and when she was able to give evidence, though he appeared at the trial with a different dress and with a wig on, she was struck with terror at the sight of him, and fainted, but gave evidence; the culprit was convicted and executed. The medical gentleman added, that when she had finished her narrative, she declared that she felt the pressure of the man's hand on her neck while she related it, and that her throat had gradually contracted from the time when the melancholy event occurred. At length her throat became so contracted, that she was hardly able to receive the least sustenance. Mrs. Brooke never had an opportunity of knowing more of the lady.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

AFTER the death of Mr. Donaldson, I was soon introduced by my father to Dr. Monsey, physician to Chelsea Hospital. He had been private and resident physician to the Earl of Godolphin, at his lordship's mansion in the Stable-yard, St. James's. In consequence of this connexion, and by his original humour, talents, and learning, he became known to some of the most distinguished of our nobility. He was very blunt in his manner, which has often been compared with that of Dean Swift. There was, however, this difference in their characters: the dean would vent his temper often with brutal insolence and without occasion; Monsey was never harsh in his manner, except to correct folly, revile vice, and ridicule affectation. He was born at Swaffham, in Norfolk, where he had an extensive practice, and afterward went to Norwich. His medical tutor was a very famous physician in the county of Norfolk, named Sir Benjamin Wrench, the grandfather, as I understand, of Mr. Wrench, a popular actor on the London stage. Sir Benjamin was so mild in his manner and so bland in his utterance, that he gave occasion to the well-known, but perhaps nearly obsolete, designation of "Silver-tongued Sir Benjamin." Dr.



Monsey thought Sir Benjamin and old Dr. Heberden two of the wisest and most amiable men he had ever known, as well as two excellent physicians. There was a portrait of Sir Benjamin in Dr. Monsey's drawing-room at Chelsea Hospital, which the doctor often looked at with great reverence, and never without paying an affectionate tribute to his memory. The painting was by no means unskilful as a work of art, and the portrait had that expression of mild benignity which was generally ascribed to the original.

Dr. Monsey told the following story of Sir Benjamin, as a fact which he knew, but which I have since heard attributed to others. Sir Benjamin had visited a patient who had only given him a guinea as a fee, after a long and tedious consultation, which Sir Benjamin deemed an insufficient recompense. He therefore desired to have a lighted candle, though it was noon-day, and when he received it he stooped and looked about the room. Being asked if he missed any thing, he said he was afraid that he had dropped a guinea. The patient took the hint, and the doctor departed fully satisfied.

Dr. Monsey was educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he caught punning, but seldom condescended to practise it, yet he had all Dean Swift "by heart," to use the old expression. He used to relate many puns of his college contemporaries, which I have forgotten. I remember only one, which is, perhaps, not worth reviving. An old member of St. John's College, the high mart of punning, observing a carpenter putting a wooden covering over a bell to prevent the rain from injuring it, told the carpenter that the covering was too small. The man respectfully declared that it was large enough. "Why," said the inveterate punster, "in spite of your covering, the bell must be now so wet you can (*w*)ring it."

Another sally of humour, though from a lower character, was of a higher order if intended. A querulous old fellow, high in one of the colleges, was perpetually complaining of something at the table. On one occasion he found fault with a large pewter dish which contained a calf's-head. The old gentleman declared that the dish was dirty, and the cook was ordered up to be scolded. "Why is this dish so dirty?" said old querulous. "Dirty," said the man, "it is so clean that you may see *your face in it*." All but the old gentleman took the answer as a good joke, if not accidental; and the old gentleman unconsciously continued his complaint.

One story is certainly worth recording. Dr. Monsey, with two or three old members of the university, in the course of an evening walk, differed about a proper definition of man. While they were severally offering their notions on the subject, they came to a wall where an itinerant artist had drawn various representations of animals, ships, &c. After complimenting him on his skill, one of the gentlemen asked him if he could *draw an inference*. "No," said the artist, "I never saw one." Logic then gave way to jocularly, and a man coming by with a fine team of horses, they stopped him, spoke highly of the condition of his horses, particularly admiring the first. "That horse, carter," said another of the gentlemen, "seems to be

a very strong one; I suppose he could draw a butt." The man assented. "Do you think he could *draw an inference*?"—"Why," said the man, "he can draw any thing *in reason*." "There," said Monsey, "what becomes of your definition, when you met a man that could *not draw an inference* and a *horse that could*?"

Before Monsey settled as a physician in London, he had been very intimate with Sir Robert Walpole. Sir Robert was fond of wit and humour, and sometimes gave a dinner to his friends at an inn in the neighbourhood of his own seat, Houghton Hall. The landlord of this inn was reputed to be a great wit, and Sir Robert admired his prompt humour so much, that he generally desired him after dinner to join the company and take his place at the social board. The company were generally gratified by the humour of the landlord, who by the encouragement of Sir Robert was admitted upon terms of equality. On one of these occasions, when Monsey was of the party, an old dull Norfolk baronet, who had nothing to recommend him but wealth, was so jealous of the attention which the landlord received, that he openly remonstrated with Sir Robert on his permitting such a man to sit in his company. The landlord modestly observed, that as Sir Robert, who gave the dinner, and all the gentlemen present, condescended to admit him, he saw no reason why the baronet should take exceptions. "Pho," said the baronet, "your father was a butcher."—"Well," said the landlord, "there is no great difference between your father and mine, for if my father *killed calves yours brought them up*." All the company took the joke immediately, except the baronet, who replied, "What! do you make my father a grazier?"

When Monsey established himself in London, his skill as a physician and the oddity of his humour, as well as his professional sagacity, introduced him to persons of the highest rank, who had sense enough to overcome the pride of nobility. Among others was the Lord Townshend of that day. He told the doctor that when the great Lord Somers had fallen into imbecility, he was still apparently anxious to appear in the character of a statesman, regularly attending the cabinet council, where he sat in unobserving silence, and was regarded with great respect, but merely as a child before whom any discussion might take place. The only symptom of remembrance or recognition that he discovered was when the Duke of Marlborough began to speak, and he then uttered a shouting noise, as if he recollected that his grace was the only authority upon a military subject that deserved attention. The duke, upon the breaking up of the council, always used to say to Lord Townshend, "If I am reduced to the state of Lord Somers, for Heaven's sake save me, save me."

It happened unfortunately that his grace was reduced to a similar state of imbecility, and, like Lord Somers, would always attend the cabinet council. He was also so enfeebled in body, that he could not walk without the danger of falling, but so jealous that he refused assistance lest his weakness should be suspected; and Lord Townshend used to say that upon such occasions he was obliged to pretend



the floor was so slippery that he was in danger of falling at every step, and therefore begged his grace's arm, that they might support each other, and in this manner he cheated the duke into safety. The doctor had known one of the house-porters at Marlborough House when in a former service, and requested that he would permit him, as he never saw his grace, to conceal himself in a corner of the hall, that he might see the duke enter his sedan-chair when he went on an airing. The man consented, but desired the doctor not to let the duke see him, as his grace was always much disturbed at the sight of a stranger. The doctor went behind the door, but in his eagerness to see the duke, he projected his head too far, and caught his grace's eye. The duke, all the while that he was getting into the chair, and when he was seated, kept his eye steadily fixed on the doctor, and at the moment when the chairmen were carrying him away, Monsey saw his features gather into a whimper like a child, and tears start into his eyes. That respectable biographer, Archdeacon Coxe, in his life of the Duke of Marlborough, appears to represent him as having retained his mental powers to the last; but as he derived his chief materials from the archives of the family, it is not probable that they would comprise any records of imbecility, while Monsey's testimony was the evidence of an eyewitness, and corroborates that of Lord Townshend on the duke's attendance at the cabinet council. His grace's favourite and constant expression of censure was the word "*silly*."

The duchess was asked how it happened that, among her many enemies, and the numerous attacks upon her, nothing was ever alleged against her conjugal fidelity. Her answer was, that as she had the handsomest and finest man in Europe, nobody would believe that she could listen to the jack-a-dandies of the day. The duchess was violent in her temper and coarse in her language, and Pope's character of *Atossa* was generally admitted at the time to be an exact portrait of her. It is well known that Lady Mary Churchill, one of her daughters, who married the Earl of Godolphin, was very partial to Congreve the poet, who used generally to dine with her till his infirmities put an end to the intercourse. On the death of Congreve, she had a small statue of him placed always on her dinner-table with a plate before it, and she used to address the figure as if a living person, offering to help him to whatever he preferred. The duchess, her mother, in her usual rough manner, never mentioned her but by the name of *Moll Congreve*.

The Earl of Godolphin, with whom Dr. Monsey resided, was a very mild and amiable nobleman, of a retired disposition. He was very fat and difficult to bleed; but my father, who attended him as an oculist by Monsey's recommendation, always successfully performed the operation, and the earl requested his assistance in that way when his eyes were wholly unaffected. The noble lord only read two works, viz. "Burnet's History of his own Times," and "Colley Cibber's Apology." When he had perused these works throughout, he began them again, and seemed to be regardless of all other authors. On some occasions, the earl wishing to get rid of

domestic state, used to dine in a private room, at the Thatched House in St. James's-street, with Monsey alone. On one of these occasions, as Monsey sauntered up St. James's-street, leaving the earl over a newspaper, he met old Lord Townshend, who learning where Lord Godolphin was, said he would dine with him. Monsey bitterly regretted what he had said, but there was no remedy, as Lord Townshend was a rough, boisterous, determined man. When he entered the tavern-room, addressing Lord Godolphin, he said, "Now, my lord, I know you don't like this intrusion." The earl mildly said in answer, "Why, my lord, to say the truth, I really do not, because I have only ordered a dinner for Monsey and myself, and have nothing fit for your lordship unless you will wait." "No, no," said Lord Townshend, "any thing will do for me;" sitting down and indulging in a sort of tumultuous gayety, very unsuitable to the placid temper of Lord Godolphin. In the course of conversation, Lord Townshend said, "My lord, does Monsey flatter you?" "I hope not," said the earl, mildly. Monsey immediately said, "I never practised flattery, because I think none but a knave could give it, and none but a fool receive it." "That may be," added Lord Townshend, "but by G— we all like it!" "I wish I had known your lordship's opinion," said Monsey, "before I had made my foolish speech."

I do not mention this anecdote as interesting in itself, but as an illustration of character; and Monsey was too conspicuous in his day to be unworthy of notice, and too much misconceived not to demand from friendship a vindication of his nature and conduct. The great Lord Chesterfield, as he is generally styled, who carried good-breeding perhaps to an excess, was very partial to Monsey, and bore with his peculiarities because he saw that, however rough his manner at times, it had always a moral tendency, and its purpose to condemn, to expose, and to ridicule vice and folly. Lord Chief Justice de Grey, afterward Lord Walsingham, was also distinguished for the elegance and suavity of his manners in private life, and he admired and cultivated an intercourse with Monsey, when he retired from the profession to which his talents, learning, and judicial conduct did so much honour. I was to dine one day with the doctor at the governor's table in Chelsea Hospital, and soon after I arrived, Lord Walsingham came in his carriage to ask Monsey to accompany him home to dinner. The doctor, knowing that I heard him, in his usual blunt way, said, "I can't, my lord, for I have a scoundrel to dine with me." "Then bring your scoundrel with you," said his lordship. The advanced age of the doctor, however, then on the verge, if not turned of ninety, and the thoughts of returning late at night, in the winter season, induced him to decline the invitation; and thus I missed the only opportunity that ever was presented to me of enjoying the society of two enlightened individuals, from the collision of whose talents and knowledge I might have derived great pleasure and important instruction. Lord Walsingham was the most elegant, clear, and eloquent forensic speaker it was ever my fortune



to hear. His voice was musical, his temper mild, yet firm, and his utterance remarkably distinct, without formality or affected precision. In this latter respect he strikingly resembled Garrick.

Monsey and Garrick were for many years upon terms of the most intimate friendship, and Mrs. Garrick was particularly gratified with the blunt sincerity of the doctor's manner, except upon one occasion.

The doctor, as he himself related, had passed a few days at Garrick's seat at Hampton. On the Monday morning, Garrick went on horseback to town to attend to the business of the theatre. Monsey and Mrs. Garrick were to follow in the course of the day, and the doctor was to dine with them in Southampton-street. When they reached Turnham Green, Monsey corrected the lady in the pronunciation of an English word; on which she expressed her surprise, as she declared she pronounced the English language so well that nobody took her for a foreigner. The doctor ridiculed her pretensions to such accuracy, and the dispute became so vehement on both sides, that the doctor was going to stop the coach, declaring that he would no longer sit with a woman so vain and foolish. Reflecting, however, that he might be obliged to walk all the way to town, he kept his seat, and neither spoke to the other for the remainder of the journey. The doctor, however, attended at dinner-time, but took no notice of Mrs. Garrick, nor she of him. At length Garrick observing this sullen silence on both sides, exclaimed; "Heydey! what, have you two lovers fallen out? Sure something terrible must have happened." The lady maintained a gloomy reserve, and left Monsey to tell the story.

After he had related what had occurred, "And so," said Garrick, "you thought of punishing yourself for her vanity and folly, when you ought rather to have turned her out of the carriage for her obstinacy and ignorance! Why, did you never hear of Potty Brice?" Garrick then said, that though he employed one of the most honest and respectable linen-draper's in town, Mrs. Garrick went into an auction-room and bought a large quantity of damaged stuff, and that when the auctioneer required her name, she thought that she should give that of an English gentlewoman, and not of a servant, when she intended to say Betty Price, but instead of that she pronounced it Potty Brice, and her own maid was obliged to explain it correctly. Monsey, however, whose spleen ended with a few rough words, paid the lady some rough compliment, and harmony was soon restored. It is an old observation, that "every thing begets its like," and so far as relates to Monsey's manner, it generated something of the same kind in his ordinary associates, for they usually addressed him with the same gross familiarity that characterized his own behaviour. This reciprocal freedom always existed between him and Garrick.

Monsey having heard one day that the Duke of Argyle and several ladies of distinction were to sup with Garrick, reproached the latter for not inviting him. "I would have asked you," said Garrick, "but you are too great a blackguard." "Why, you little scoundrel," said

Monsey, "ask Lord Godolphin, one of the best-bred men in the world, if I do not behave as well as the politest of his visitors." "Well," replied Garrick, "if you'll promise to behave properly, you shall come." Monsey promised accordingly, and attended. Garrick, however, gave the duke privately an intimation of Monsey's character. All went on well till Mrs. Garrick began to help her noble guests, in the intervals of which attention Monsey had several times presented his plate to her, but she was so occupied in showing her deference to the grandeur of the company, that she took no notice of him. At length, after presenting and withdrawing his plate, as other parties engaged her attention, he could restrain himself no longer, and exclaimed, "Will you help me, you b——, or not?" Garrick fell back in his chair with laughter; the duke, though somewhat prepared for the oddity of Monsey's character, was struck with surprise, and all was consternation with the rest of the company. Monsey, not the least abashed at the confusion which he had excited, gave way to his humour, related some whimsical anecdotes, and rendered the remainder of the evening a scene of good-humour and merriment.

I remember a similar instance when I dined with Mrs. Billington and her first husband at Brompton. Dr. Wolcot, the well-known Peter Pindar, was of the party. The doctor, who appeared to be hungry, eyed one dish with particular eagerness. Mr. Billington, who was an intelligent and agreeable man, with a waggish disposition, gave me a wink, and disregarded Wolcot's plate, under an appearance of respect to other persons near him. The doctor's appetite could be restrained no longer, and thrusting his fork into the dish, he exclaimed, "D— me, I will have this," to the surprise and amusement of all present, among whom was the celebrated Irish orator, Curran. After dinner, Curran and Wolcot drew close to each other and entered into conversation. Curran introduced the subject of painting, and expressed his peculiar notions and views. After hearing him for some time, the doctor suddenly arose and left the room. As I came with him, I followed him to know if he was taken ill, or wished then to return to town. I found he was disgusted with the conversation of Curran, exclaiming, "Talk of Dr. Numpscull, he would cut into a dozen such fellows as Curran." A Dr. Holton, who conducted "The Herald" newspaper at that time, was nicknamed Dr. Numpscull, because he had placed the poet's corner in the middle of the paper.

A difference afterward took place between Dr. Wolcot and me, which lasted some years, but hearing, during the interval, from my friend Mr. Northcote, that he had dined the day before at Mr. Godwin's, in company with Curran and Dr. Wolcot, I expressed a desire to know if the doctor had formed a more favourable opinion of the Irish wit than at the last interview. "That I can tell you," said Mr. Northcote, "for we walked home together." Speaking of Curran, said he, "Dr. Wolcot expressed great disgust at his presuming frivolity, and declared he would not insult his magpie by offering her that fellow's brains for a dinner."



I have been always puzzled by the contradictory opinions of Dr. Wolcot and my friend Joseph Richardson, on the powers of Mr. Curran. I have stated the doctor's, but on asking Richardson his, he said that Curran was certainly a man of great genius. From what I heard from Curran myself, I confess I formed no favourable opinion of him, perhaps for want of compasses to measure his character at the meeting already mentioned.

Before dinner, Mrs. Billington, addressing Curran, said, "I hear you are to be lord-chancellor for Ireland; and then I hope you will procure some appointment for me." Curran, instead of modestly expressing his doubt if ever he should be raised to such a situation, simply said that he should always be happy to testify his respect for her. After dinner, he evidently endeavoured to impress Dr. Wolcot with a high opinion of his conversational talents. I heard him speak in precise terms of "a concatenated series of consecutive arguments," and other phrases which appeared to me redundant and verbose. Yet it cannot be supposed that the good sense of the Irish people would have raised Mr. Curran into unmerited distinction; and the excellent biographical tribute which the son has paid to the memory of his father, appears to justify the national estimation.

It is now full time for me to return to Dr. Monsey. Garrick gave the following account of the origin of his acquaintance with him. He said that being in the court at the Old Bailey, he heard a gentleman request a man who stood before him to move a little on one side, that he might have an opportunity of seeing the bench; the man, however, a stout fellow, obstinately retained his station. The gentleman repeated his request, but the fellow continued inflexible. At length the gentleman, in a tone somewhat louder than a whisper, said, "If I were not a coward, I would give you a blow even in the court." The oddity of the declaration induced Garrick to think he must be a singular character, and he felt a wish to be acquainted with him, which desire increased when he knew that the gentleman was Dr. Monsey, of whom he had often heard but never seen.\* Garrick therefore contrived to get introduced to the doctor, and for many years a close intimacy subsisted between them.

It may be asked; as Dr. Johnson says of Addison and Steele, what could divide such friends? "but," as he adds, "among the uncertainties of the human state, we are doomed to number the instability of friendship." Nor is the reference inapplicable, for Garrick and Monsey possessed such intellectual powers as might have qualified them for an intimacy with the former two distinguished characters. The cause of the separation, as I heard Monsey state, was as follows:—A feud arose in the theatre, perhaps on account of the memorable Chinese Festival, which Garrick in vain came forward to appease, and was grossly insulted. The circumstance having been mentioned on the following morning to Pulteney, Earl of Bath, when Monsey and a well-

\* This circumstance is differently stated in a memoir of the doctor in the *European Magazine* of 1789, as having happened at the theatre, but I recollect Monsey's account precisely.

known literary character were present, the earl expressed his surprise that Garrick, who had fame enough as well as property, did not, after such an outrage, indignantly retire from public life. "Why, my lord," said Monsey, "Garrick knows that a guinea has cross on one side and pile on the other." Monsey positively assured me that this was all he uttered on the occasion. The literary man, however, who probably had reasons for courting Garrick, reported the conversation to him, with doubtless some exaggeration of what Monsey had said.

A few days after Monsey received an anonymous letter, with the words of Horace, "*Hic Niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto*," in which the writer, in a disguised hand and in very severe terms, reprobated those who abused a friend in his absence. Monsey having no suspicion who was the author, in a few days called as usual upon Garrick, but found the husband and wife so cold and repulsive in their reception, that he took a hasty departure. On his way home it struck him that Garrick had written the letter, and on examining it he saw evident marks through the disguise of Garrick's hand. Monsey called the next day on Lord Bath, and mentioned how he had been received by the Garricks, when his lordship agreed in the suspicion that Garrick wrote the letter, at the same time declaring that if he could discover the malignant tale-bearer, he should never enter his doors again. The parties were never reconciled, and the separation must have been a great loss to both, as their humours were similar, and they afforded much amusement to each other.

Monsey had a great contempt for Warburton, whose learning he distrusted, and whose abilities he despised. He told me that he once dined at Garrick's with Warburton and Dr. Brown, the author of "An Estimate on the Manners of the Times," of "An Essay on the Characteristics of Shaftesbury," and of the tragedy of "Barbarossa." He also wrote a poem on the death of Pope, forming a sort of parody on "The Essay on Man," which Warburton introduced into his edition of Pope's works. Brown was a more obsequious parasite to Warburton than even Bishop Hurd was reported to have been. After the dinner, and during the wine, Garrick said, partly in earnest and partly in jest, "Now, Monsey, don't indulge in your usual freedom, but let us be a little serious." "Oh!" said Brown, "you may be sure that Monsey will restrain his strange humour before Dr. Warburton, as he is afraid of him." Monsey said that he waited a moment or two, to hear whether Warburton would say any thing in rebuke to Brown, and ask why Dr. Monsey should be afraid of him; but as Warburton maintained a kind of proud silence, Monsey said, "No, sir, I am neither afraid of Dr. Warburton nor of his Jack-pudding." This sally produced a solemn pause, to the confusion of Garrick, who saw it was hopeless to restore good-humour, and the party soon broke up.

As I do not profess to write with any regard to regular order, but relate my recollections when they occur to me, I may be permitted to say a few words more of Warburton, who was once addressed in a pamphlet, "To the most impudent man alive," and to whom proud and insolent might have been very properly added. Quin was in the



habit of meeting Warburton at Mr. Allen's, at Prior Park, near Bath. Quin was a discerning man, and above all sycophantic arts. He had often observed the interested servility of Warburton towards Mr. Allen. Warburton was mortified at the superior powers of conversation which Quin possessed, but was afraid of encountering his talents for prompt repartee. On one occasion, after a conversation on the subject of the martyrdom of Charles the First, for the justice of which Quin contended, Warburton asked him "by what law the king was condemned." Quin, with his usual energy, exclaimed, "By all the law which he had left in the land!" an answer which was more ingenious than founded in truth and reason, but which, however, at once put an end to the controversy.

On another occasion, when Warburton with grave subtlety endeavoured to degrade Quin from the social and equal companion to the player, he professed his desire to hear Mr. Quin recite something from the drama, as he had not an opportunity of hearing him on the stage. Quin delivered the speech from Otway's "Pierre," in which there is the following passage:—

*Honest men*  
Are the soft, easy cushions on which knaves  
Repose and fatten,

alternately looking at Allen and Warburton in so marked a manner that the reference was understood by all the company, and effectually prevented any subsequent attacks from the divine on the actor.

An evident proof of Warburton's pride was related to me by Dr. Wolcot. The doctor knew a cousin of Mr. Allen, a chattering old woman; she told Wolcot that people in general were much mistaken in supposing that Dr. Warburton was a proud man, for she had often met him at her cousin Allen's in the company of lords and bishops and other high people, and he paid more attention to her, and talked more with her than with any of the great folks who were present.

This fact fully illustrates Warburton's character, as it shows that he manifested his indifference, if not contempt, of the higher visitors by his familiarity with an ignorant woman, from whom he could receive no entertainment, except what his vanity derived from the consciousness of his own superiority. It has always been wonderful to me that Warburton should have acquired so high a reputation. His insolence, vanity, and ridiculous ambition of superior penetration, have been ably exposed by the severe criticism on his "Comments on Shakspeare's text," by Mr. Heath, in his revisal of that text, and by the caustic humour of Mr. Edwards on the same subject.\* Beautiful as the "Essay on Man" is as a poem, it is an inconsistent jumble of religion and philosophy. There are many passages in favour of fatalism which Warburton has attempted to reconcile and defend as supporting the Christian faith and doctrines, but with refining sophistry, if

\* The arrogance of Warburton is well described in a work called "The Revery, or a Flight to the Paradise of Fools," mentioned before, written by the author of "The Adventures of a Guinea," of whom more hereafter.

not with interested dissimulation and pitiable prejudice. How Pope could be content with such a vindication of his poem is surprising, as the frequent references to fatalism in Warburton's defence must have convinced him that his poem was liable in that respect to all the objections which had been urged against it. It was generally reported that the passage in the comedy of "The Hypocrite," where Mawworm, speaking of his wife when addressing Cantwell, says, "Between you and me, doctor, Molly is breeding again," was a copy of what Warburton had said to a *friendly* clergyman, with whose wife he was supposed to be upon too intimate a footing.

There is a curious letter of Warburton's, written to Concanen, one of Pope's enemies, degrading the genius of the poet, before he had discovered the importance which he might derive from an alliance with him. This letter Mr. Malone has copied and introduced at the end of the play of "Julius Cæsar," in his edition of the works of Shakespeare. I asked the late James Boswell, the son of Johnson's biographer, what had become of the original of that letter, and he told me that he could not find it among the papers of Mr. Malone, to whom he was executor.

I cannot refrain from breaking in upon the progress of my narrative, as I have often done, in order to pay a tribute to Mr. Boswell, jr. I have frequently dined with him at a Mr. Neelson's, a stock-broker to the banking-houses of Coutts and Snow, and also at Mr. John Kemble's and Dr. George Pearson's, and have always found him to be a man of learning, wit, and humour, and one of the most honourable characters that I ever knew. He died after a very few days' illness, in the prime of life, to the regret of all his friends. He was an intimate friend of the celebrated General Paoli, who, I believe, appointed him one of his executors. I was very intimate with his father, the biographer of Johnson, and remember dining with him at Guildhall, when the elder Alderman Boydell gave his grand civic festival on being raised to the mayoralty. Mr. Pitt honoured the table on that occasion with his presence, and when the company removed to a room appropriated to sociality, I had the pleasure of sitting near the great minister and Sir Joshua Reynolds. In a short time Mr. Boswell contrived to be asked to favour the company with a song. He declared his readiness to comply, but first delivered a short preface, in which he observed that it had been his good fortune to be introduced to several of the potentates, and most of the great characters of Europe, but with all his endeavours he had never been successful in obtaining an introduction to a gentleman who was an honour to his country, and whose talents he held in the highest esteem and admiration.

It was evident to all the company that Mr. Boswell alluded to Mr. Pitt, who sat with all the dignified silence of a marble statue, though indeed in such a situation he could not but take the reference to himself. Mr. Boswell then sang a song of his own composition, which was a parody on Dibdin's "Sweet little Cherub," under the title of "A grocer of London," which rendered the reference to Mr. Pitt too evident to be mistaken, as the great minister was then a member



of the Grocers' Company. This song Mr. Boswell, partly volunteering and partly pressed by the company, sang at least six times, in so much that Mr. Pitt was obliged to relax from his gravity, and join in the general laugh at the oddity of Mr. Boswell's character. Boswell and I came away together, both in so convivial a mood that we roared out all the way "The grocer of London," till we reached Hatton Garden, where I then resided, to the annoyance of many watchmen whom we roused from their peaceful slumbers, without however being taken into custody for disturbing their repose. In the course of the evening Mr. Boswell and I happened to differ about the meaning of a word. I met him the next day about twelve o'clock near St. Dunstan's church, as fresh as a rose. He recollected our dispute, and took me into a bookseller's shop to refer to Johnson's Dictionary, but which of us was right I cannot now recollect.

I introduced Dr. Wolcot to Dr. Monsey a few months before the death of the latter, of whom Wolcot made an admirable likeness, which Monsey left to me, and which I presented to Mr. Soane, the architect, in return for much kindness on his part. Wolcot and Monsey did not harmonize, though they were both men of learning, both well acquainted with the world, and similar in their opinions of it. Monsey had the highest admiration of Pope, and Wolcot, though also a warm admirer of the poet, was too much inclined to criticise some of the passages which Monsey quoted, who could not bear to have opinions long rooted in his mind attacked with unexpected severity. Therefore, when the portrait was finished, Monsey desired that I would bring Wolcot no more. Dr. Monsey had the utmost contempt for funeral ceremonies, and exacted a promise from his daughter that she would not interfere with the arrangement which he had made with Mr. Thompson Forster, the surgeon, for the disposal of his body, conceiving that whenever it was dissected by that gentleman, something might occur for the illustration and advancement of anatomy. "What can it signify to me," said he, "whether my carcass is cut up by the knife of a surgeon, or the tooth of a worm?" He had a large box in his chambers at Chelsea, full of air-holes, for the purpose of carrying his body to Mr. Forster in case he should be in a trance when supposed to be dead. It was provided with poles like a sedan-chair. He was accustomed to say that he should die, as his father did, without any real or nominal complaint, and go out like the snuff of a candle; generally adding, "I wish I were dead, but, like all fools and all wits, I am afraid to die." He exacted another promise from his daughter, importing that after his death she should not live within a certain distance of London, conceiving that she might be tempted to launch into expense beyond her income.

His daughter had been married to Mr. Alexander, a wholesale linen draper in Cateaton-street, and, I believe, great uncle to the present Lord Caledon. I was intimately acquainted with one of their relations, Mr. Henry Alexander, who was a member of the House of Commons, and afterward secretary to Lord Caledon, during his government at the Cape of Good Hope. Harry Alexander, as he was

generally styled, was a scholar and a gentleman. He had a great command of words, but never affected oratory, and his voice being unequal, he was not attended to as he ought to have been, as his understanding was sound, and his matter always solid. The inequality of his tones in parliament procured him, as I have heard, the name of "*Bubble and Squeak*." He was, however, an excellent man, and I revere his memory. I have some pride in recollecting, that on account of the good terms in which I lived with politicians whom I knew on both sides, he gave me the name of "*Atticus*," of which, however undeserving, I am proud as the flattering designation of a friend. It is certain that while I was kindly received by some distinguished members of the Pitt party, I was upon the most intimate footing with Sheridan, Richardson, and their political associates.

Dr. Monsey and the celebrated Mrs. Montague lived long in intimate friendship, and kept up a sort of ludicrous gallantry with each other. I remember I once had the pleasure of meeting her at Dr. Monsey's, and of handing her to her carriage. I said, as we went down stairs, "Are you not afraid, madam, of being known to visit a gentleman in his chambers?" "Why, yes," said she, "considering my youth and beauty, and the youth of the gallant. I hope the meeting will not get into *The Morning Post*."

The published letters of this lady are admirable, and her *Essay on Shakspeare* is a valuable vindication of our great bard from the strictures of Voltaire. It was supposed that at an early period of her life she had been attached to the venerable Lord Lyttelton, beyond the limits of platonism; but Monsey, who would not credit any imputation upon her moral character, said that, if such a supposition could possibly have any foundation, it rather applied to Lord Bath, with whom and his lady she made a tour in Germany. There was something remarkably shrewd and penetrating in her eyes, tending to disconcert those towards whom they were particularly directed. Dr. Monsey gave me two of her letters, of which I permitted copies to be taken for a periodical literary vehicle, no longer in existence, and which I may introduce in the present work.

Mrs. Montague, in the early part of her life, was so fond of having various colours in her attire, that Lord Chesterfield always called her *Iris*. Her letters are throughout excellent, and I understand were written without any hesitation. In the "*Dialogues of the Dead*," written by Lord Lyttelton, there are two written by Mrs. Montague, which, in all respects, are much superior to those of his lordship. The unfavourable manner in which Dr. Johnson mentions Lord Lyttelton, in his "*Lives of the Poets*," induced her to relinquish all intercourse with him. She was indebted for some part of her education to the celebrated Dr. Conyers Middleton, and it is said, that such was the precocity of her powers, that she had copied the whole of "*The Spectator*" before she was eight years of age; but whatever might have been the maturity of her mind at that early age, it is hardly possible to give credit to the report.

Mentioning Voltaire, I may as well relate in this place a circum-



stance communicated to me by Monsey, upon what he deemed good authority, that Voltaire being invited to dine with a lady of quality while he was in London, to meet some persons of distinction, waited upon the lady an hour or two earlier than the time appointed. The lady apologized for the necessity of leaving him, as she had visits to pay, but begged he would amuse himself with the books in the room, promising to return very soon. After the party broke up, having occasion to refer to her *escritoir*, she evidently found that it had been opened in her absence, and though nothing had been taken away, her papers were obviously not in the same order as when she left them. She inquired anxiously who had been in the room, and was assured nobody but Voltaire, who had remained there till she returned home. As Voltaire was destitute of all religious principles, it is not wonderful that he was equally devoid of all moral delicacy. A severe account of his conduct towards the great king of Prussia, while he was at the court of that monarch, is given in "The Reverie," a work before referred to.

Voltaire once dined in company with Pope, Lord Bolingbroke, and several of the most distinguished characters in London, and said it was "the proudest day he had ever enjoyed."

Conyers Middleton, whose learning and talents it would be presumptuous in me to praise, had a high opinion of the mental powers of old Chubb, who was in the humble condition of a tallow-chandler, at Salisbury, and says in one of his letters, "I mean soon to spend a philosophical day with Chubb at Salisbury." Chubb was a very shrewd and well-informed man, though unacquainted with classical literature. He published many tracts on religious subjects. He was a pious Unitarian, and in one of his works whimsically, but profanely, terms the Trinity, "A Triangular Deity." I once dined with an intelligent lady, a native and constant resident of Salisbury, who declared that she had never heard of Chubb's name till I mentioned it, and then professed an earnest desire to read the works of her old countryman.

Dr. Monsey, I regret to say, was equally free in his opinions of the doctrine of the Trinity, and once riding with a bishop in Hyde-Park, the latter declined noticing a person who bowed to him, telling the doctor his reason—that the person who had passed believed only in "One God." "Why," said Monsey, "I know many fools who believe there are three." The bishop immediately galloped off, thinking the devil was beside him. But whatever might be the opinions of the doctor on religious subjects, it is certain that he admitted the existence of a Divine Agent, though his language was sometimes whimsical on this subject.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**MR. HUGH KELLY.** This gentleman was one of my father's friends, whom I knew in early life. He took notice of me in my youth, and allowed me the use of his library. He lived then in Knight-riding-street, Doctors Commons, in a house that belonged to his friend and patron, Sir Robert Ladbroke.

Mr. Kelly's history is rather curious. The earliest accounts of him represent him a pot-boy at a public-house in Dublin. This house was frequented by the inferior actors. In this humble situation he displayed literary talents, and having gained access to one of the newspapers, he contrived to obtain orders for admission into the theatre from those inferior actors, by paying frequent tributes to their merit in a public print. Struck with his talents, he was rescued from this degrading situation, and bound apprentice to a staymaker, with whom he served his time with diligence and fidelity. As soon, however, as he was released from his indentures, having increased his literary reputation during his apprenticeship, and feeling an ambition above the station of a staymaker, he determined to try his fortune in London, and soon procured a connexion among the publishers of magazines and daily papers. At length he was appointed editor of "The Public Ledger," a prominent journal at that period, and he became well known as a political writer in favour of government. A pension of two hundred pounds a year was allowed him by the minister of that period, which he retained till his death, as he had been the victim of popular fury in his character of a dramatic author; and his widow was permitted to enjoy a moiety of this pension till her death, which happened in 1826. Mr. Kelly died in 1777.

Reflecting on the uncertainty of permanent support arising from magazines and newspapers, Mr. Kelly had turned his attention to the law, and was in due time called to the bar. Having a retentive memory, and a promptitude of expression, he soon began to rise in reputation as a lawyer, and would probably have acquired a respectable independence if he had lived, but he died in his thirty-eighth year, of an abscess in his side.

It seemed to be Mr. Kelly's aim, both in conversation and in his writings, to use fine words, apparently, if possible, to obliterate all traces of the meanness of his origin, and of his early employments. Soon after he was called to the bar he turned his attention to the drama, and produced his comedy entitled "False Delicacy," which, from the novelty of its characters and the refinement of its sentiments, but particularly from the admirable manner in which it was represented, made a very favourable impression on the public. He had, however, one great difficulty to encounter before the manager, Mr. Garrick, could venture to bring the play forward.



Mr. Kelly had written a poem, entitled "Thespis," in which he criticised the chief theatrical performers of that time, in the manner of Churchill's "Rosciad," but with an inferiority of talent which admits of no comparison. This work appeared soon after Mr. Barry returned from Ireland, and brought with him Mrs. Dancer, whom he afterward married. She was an excellent actress both in tragedy and comedy. Her *Rosalind* was, in my opinion, one of the most perfect performances I ever attended. She happened to be very near-sighted, and Kelly, in his "Thespis," when mentioning Barry, alluding to Mrs. Dancer, said that he had "thrust his moon-eyed idiot on the town." There was a severity and vulgarity in this censure quite inconsistent with the character of Mr. Kelly, and his strictures on other performers were not more gentle, so that it required all the suavity of his own manners, and even all the zeal of his friend Mr. Garrick, to effect a reconciliation.

As Mr. Kelly had allotted a principal character to Mrs. Dancer in his play, it was natural to suppose that she would revolt with indignation from a proposal to take any part in support of it. The lady, however, though at first repulsive and hostile, proved in the end forgiving and good-humoured. She supported the part assigned to her with admirable spirit, and also condescended to speak a long and humorous epilogue written by Mr. Garrick. Her admirable mimicry of the Scotch and Irish characters added much to the attraction and success of the comedy.

In this play, to keep aloof from the familiar appellations of ordinary life, and perhaps to throw a farther veil over his original condition, two of the ladies were named *Hortensia* and *Theodora*, and the males are chiefly men of rank and title. In his subsequent comedy of "*A School for Wives*," when a challenge is sent from one character to another, it is addressed "*To Craggs Belville, Esq.*"—Craggs having been the name of a gentleman formerly high in office, and esteemed by Pope and Addison; and from what I recollect of Mr. Kelly, I have no doubt that his choice of fine names arose from the motive which I have assigned.

Mr. Kelly, as I have said, was perhaps too lofty, pompous, and flowery in his language, but good-natured, affable, and gentlemanly in his deportment, even to an excess of elaborate courtesy. An unlucky instance of his loftiness of language occurred, as well as I can recollect, on the trial of the notorious *Barrington*, who had picked a lady's pocket. The prosecutrix seemed to be inclined to give her evidence with tenderness, and the culprit might probably have escaped punishment, but unfortunately Mr. Kelly pressed her a little too much, and seemed to convert her lenity into self-defence, when he addressed her in the following words: "Pray, madam, how could you, in the immensity of the crowd, determine the identity of the man?"

This question was wholly unintelligible to the simple woman, and he was obliged to reduce his question into merely "How do you know he was the man?" "Because," said she, "I caught his hand in my pocket."

As a dramatic writer, Mr. Kelly evidently improved in his progress. His last comedy, "A School for Wives," is much more effective in humour, and more pathetic in interest, than his "False Delicacy," and his "Word to the Wise." The last piece fell a victim to party prejudice. To this last work he wrote a preface, which he addressed to Mr. Horne, since Horne Tooke, and it is a composition of considerable merit, liberal, just, candid and argumentative.

It was an adventurous undertaking for an unlearned man to attack Horne Tooke, but Kelly had right and justice on his side, and Horne Tooke did not attempt an answer. As party prejudice was still strong against Mr. Kelly, he was obliged to remain in ambush when his "School for Wives" was represented; and the late Major Addington, afterward Sir William, and head of the Bow-street magistracy, attended all the rehearsals at the theatre, appeared in the character of the author, and when the play was successful, came publicly forward and gave the credit to Mr. Kelly.

I remember, when I called on Mr. Kelly at his house in Gough Square to congratulate him on the success of his play, and found Mrs. Kelly alone, she said, exultingly, "Yes, we have stolen a march upon the patriots."

Mr. Kelly had the privilege of writing orders for Covent Garden theatre by the kindness of the late Mr. Harris: which was the more kind as none of Mr. Kelly's plays were originally produced, or I believe ever represented, at that theatre. Mr. Kelly often favoured me with orders, by which means I had frequent opportunities of attending dramatic performances, and imbibed a great partiality for the stage.

Before I take leave of my father's old friend, and I may add my own indulgent patron, I will state one fact which Mr. Kelly mentioned to my father. Lord Baltimore, as is well known, was tried for having kept in his house, as was supposed for seduction, a Miss Woodcock, the daughter of a tradesman in the city of London. As the public prints were full of the story, which made a great noise in the metropolis, Lord Baltimore wrote to Mr. Kelly, desiring that he would call on him. Mr. Kelly accordingly waited immediately upon his lordship, who consulted him on the propriety of publishing some answer to the numerous attacks which were made on him through the public press, proposing that Mr. Kelly should take up his cause and publish something in his favour. After entering into his lordship's feelings, Mr. Kelly advised him to wait the issue of the trial, and then, if public prejudice remained still strong against him, whatever the decision might be, there would be time enough to bring forward a defence or vindication. His lordship heard him with great attention, and apologizing for retiring a few moments, returned to the room, thanked Mr. Kelly for his candid, judicious, and disinterested advice, and attended him himself to the street door. When Mr. Kelly reached home, he found a very polite letter from Lord Baltimore, written during the few moments that he had been absent from



the room, and despatched immediately, containing a bank-note for one hundred pounds. This delicate act of generosity was characteristic of his lordship.

On the death of Mr. Kelly, I was sent by my father with his subscription to the widow for the publication of her husband's works. After some years, she married a Captain Davis, who never could bear to hear that her first husband had been a staymaker, though his own talents and attainments would admit of no comparison with those of her former husband.

To my surprise, after more than forty years' separation, Mrs. Kelly called on me at the Sun office, in the Strand, and invited me to dine with her, and talk over old stories. In my early acquaintance I was unable to appreciate her talents, but on the renewal I found her a very pleasant and intelligent old lady, her mental powers unimpaired, and full of anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, and the chief literary characters of her day.

Mr. Kelly had two sons, both of whom died in the East Indies, of whom one had settled a comfortable income on his mother. He had married, and left a daughter, who had also married, and returned with her husband to England. She told me that she was not on good terms with them, as she thought they had treated her ill, and she added that they should not derive any advantage from her death. A few days before that event, she sent for me, but I happened unluckily to be out of town, otherwise perhaps I should have had some token of old friendship. She was about eighty-eight years of age.

The late Sir HENRY BATE DUDLEY, Bart. I had the pleasure of being acquainted with this gentleman during at least forty years, and had, therefore, a good opportunity of forming a due estimate of his character. He was constituted, both in mind and body, for the army or navy, rather than for the church. In either of these provinces of national defence he would have been distinguished for the intrepidity of his spirit, as well as for the resources of a quick and inventive mind. He had often, in his younger days, displayed his poetical talents in monthly magazines, but never appeared conspicuously before the public till he established a daily paper, under the title of "The Morning Post," which, though it has since passed through various other hands, is still a respectable public journal, and probably owes the continuance of its reputation to the character which it originally derived from his talents and enterprising spirit.

There was a sportive severity in his writings which gave a new character to the public press, as the newspapers, before "The Morning Post" appeared, generally were dull, heavy, and insipid. It may be said that he was too personal in his strictures in general, and in his allusions to many characters of his time; but it may be said also, that they were generally characters of either sex, who had rendered themselves conspicuous for folly, vice, or some prominent absurdity, by which they became proper objects for satirical animadversion. Such effusions of his pen brought him into hostile collision with some

of the persons whom he censured, but he always manfully supported his character, and was wholly incapable of degrading concession or compromising artifice.\* If his pen was generally and chiefly severe,

\* Among the unlucky hostile contests in which Sir Henry was engaged, was that with my old friend Joe Richardson, which I sincerely believe he was desirous to avoid. The origin of the unhappy dispute was as follows. Sir Henry, then the Reverend Henry Bate, was thwarted by the other proprietors of "The Morning Post," at a general meeting, among whom were the well-known Dr. Trusler and Alderman Skinner. There were other proprietors of inferior talents, none of whom were competent to decide upon the measures which Mr. Bate recommended, as necessary to promote the prosperity of the paper, except Mr. Richardson, who had remained silent. Irritated by their opposition, Mr. Bate called them a parcel of cowards, and withdrew. After he was gone, Mr. Skinner said, "If I had not a wife and family, I should call him to account for the stigma which he applied to us." No other person spoke on the subject. Reflecting upon it, and on what Mr. Skinner had said, Richardson thought it incumbent on him to demand from Mr. Bate an exception from the imputation of cowardice which he had thrown upon the proprietors. I dined with Richardson at the Rainbow coffee-house next day, for the purpose of his addressing a letter to Mr. Bate, requiring that exception. Richardson's letter was, perhaps, somewhat too lofty for the temper of such a man as Mr. Bate, and the answer was not conciliatory. Another letter was written by Richardson, but in such softened terms as to draw a more pacific answer from Mr. Bate. I believe a third letter followed, with no better effect; and the conclusion was, that the parties were to meet the following morning at five o'clock in Hyde-Park. I was the bearer of all Mr. Richardson's letters to Mr. Bate, who then lived in Surrey-street, Strand. My anxiety for the welfare of Mr. Richardson prevented my going to bed, and I waited in the park the result of the meeting. A coin was tossed for the first fire, which fell to Mr. Bate, who wounded his antagonist in the right arm, and rendered him unable to return the fire. Mr. Bate then, as I understood, came forward, and said that if Mr. Richardson's letter had been written in a less commanding style, this event would not have happened, and that he had no hesitation then in saying, that he would otherwise most willingly have exempted Mr. Richardson from any such imputation as he had applied to the other proprietors, holding him in respect and esteem. Thus the matter ended, and Mr. Bate and Mr. Richardson afterward were always on the most friendly terms. Mr. Dennis O'Brien was the second to Mr. Bate, and Mr. Mills, a surgeon, the friend of Mr. Richardson, his second. As soon as Mr. Richardson reached home, and Mr. Mills had examined his arm, he showed how well he could unite the pleasure of friendship with the profits of his profession, for he said, "Oh! Joey, don't be alarmed; this is only a five guinea job!"

Mr. Bate related to me a circumstance that well illustrates the character of an Irish duellist, which ought to be carefully distinguished from that of an Irish gentleman. He said that once being apprehensive that a dispute between him and another gentleman would terminate in a mortal contest, and being unprovided with arms, he asked a Mr. Brereton, with whom he had long been acquainted, to lend him a brace of pistols. Mr. Brereton seemed delighted with the request, as if it was a great favour conferred upon him, and brought the weapons, of which he spoke with high commendation, as if admirably constructed for the purpose. It happened that the adverse party made a satisfactory explanation to Sir Henry, and he returned the pistols, stating that he had fortunately no occasion to use them. Mr. Brereton expressed much discontent that his pistols should have been borrowed for nothing, and then observed that Sir Henry had some time before uttered some words that had offended him, and that he had often determined to demand an explanation. Sir Henry assured him that he never could intend to offend him, and had no recollection of having said any thing that could possibly displease him. This courteous assurance, however, by no means appeased Brereton, who seemed to be rising into violent emotion. "Oh! I perceive what you are at," said Sir Henry: "There, I'll take this pistol and you take the other, and we will settle the matter immediately." Finding Sir Henry so resolute, Brereton said, "Ah! I see you are a man of spirit, and as you are an old friend, let us shake hands, and the matter is over."

Some years after, Brereton, in a tavern in Dublin, waited at the bottom of the



much is to be ascribed to that knowledge of human nature which the conduct of a public journal is sure to afford, a species and an extent of knowledge which is by no means calculated to operate in favour of mankind.

It is impossible for those who have not been occupied in such a situation, or who have not been familiar with the scene of action, to have any just conception of the depravity, folly, and offensive qualities which it tends to develope. We may, therefore, fairly infer, that Sir Henry saw so much of the vice and vanity of the world as to excite something of a misanthropic feeling, which gave vigour, spirit, and severity to his pen.

In private life he was social, good-humoured, intelligent, and hospitable. He particularly excelled in relating anecdotes, in which the substance was always prominent, and the result pointed. He was the friend of merit in whatever province it might appear, and he justly prided himself on having first introduced to public notice the musical talents of the late Mr. Shield, a man whose original and powerful genius as a composer was even excelled by the benevolent and moral character of his mind.

Sir Henry possessed dramatic and poetical powers, which were successfully exercised upon many occasions. He was a profound judge of theatrical merit, and hence his admiration of Garrick was heightened into a cordial friendship between him and that unrivalled actor, of whose character, as well as genius, he always spoke in the warmest terms of friendship and esteem.

It is my sincere opinion, from a full consideration of the character of Sir Henry Bate Dudley, that the spirit, acuteness, and vigour which animated his pen as a public censor, would have rendered him conspicuous for heroism, judgment, zeal, and enterprise, in the military or naval service, at once honourable to himself, and glorious to his country. As a magistrate, he was distinguished for knowledge, decision, firmness, activity, and spirit. He was, indeed, so eminently beneficial within his sphere of action, as to stand forth as an example to all who may be invested with such judicial authority.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

**DR. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.** This pleasing, if not great poet and admirable prose writer, I never knew. He may be said to have died before my time, but not before I had begun to turn my attention towards literary pursuits. I once volunteered the delivery of a letter

stairs, with his hanger, ready to attack a person whom he expected to descend. The other, however, was prepared, and attacked Brereton first with a drawn hanger, and gave him so many wounds that he died on the spot. Such was the fate of that desperate man, who had determined to make a victim of his more wary opponent.

to him in the Temple, from a friend of my father, in order to have a chance of seeing his person; but he either was not at home, or thought it prudent to deny himself even to a boy, as his circumstances were probably quite poetical. My old friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, who brought letters to him from Cork, in the year 1766, used to speak of his benevolence and simplicity in the highest terms.

Goldsmith's life and character are so well known to the world, that it would be wasting time to enter on particulars. I shall therefore content myself with relating one anecdote, as it marks his character, and has not been printed. Mr. Cooke had engaged to meet a party at Marylebone Gardens. He had cash enough to pay for admission, but not for the necessity of coach-hire and the casualty of a supper. He therefore applied to his friend Goldsmith for the loan of a guinea. Poor Goldsmith was in the same *Par-nassian* predicament, but undertook to borrow the sum of a friend, and to bring it to Cooke before he departed for the gardens. Cooke waited in expectation to the last moment that allowed him a chance of witnessing the entertainments of the place, but no Goldsmith appeared. He therefore trusted to fortune, and sallied forth. Meeting some hospitable Irish countrymen at the place, he partook of a good supper, and did not return to his chambers till five in the morning. Finding some difficulty in opening his door, he stooped to remove the impediment, and found it was the guinea that Goldsmith had borrowed for him, wrapped in paper, which he had attempted to thrust under the door, not observing the hole in the letter-box, obvious to everybody else. Cooke thanked him in the course of the day, but observed that he ought not to have exposed the sum to such danger in so critical a state of their finances, as the laundress, coming early in the morning, or any casual stranger, might have seized the precious deposite. At what time Goldsmith had left the money he could not recollect; but he might naturally have thought that he brought it too late, as Cooke had left the chambers. In answer to Cooke's observation as to the danger of losing the guinea, he said, "In truth, my dear fellow, I did not think of that." The fact is, he probably thought of nothing but serving a friend.

Goldsmith, in the midst of all his luxuriant playfulness, was easily put out of countenance. The Miss Clara Brooke, whom I have mentioned before as one of my earliest and dearest playmates, who lived some time in my father's family, being once annoyed at a masquerade by the noisy gayety of Goldsmith, who laughed heartily at some of the jokes with which he assailed her, was induced in answer to repeat his own line in "The Deserted Village,"

"And the loud laugh which spoke the vacant mind."

Goldsmith was quite abashed at the application, and retired, as if by the word *vacant* he rather meant barren than free from care. Dr. Johnson wrote the prologue to Goldsmith's comedy of "The Good-natured Man," to which comedy the public have never done justice.



In the copy of this prologue, which appeared in the Public Advertiser, in 1769, the following couplet was inserted,—

Amid the toils of this returning year,  
When senators and nobles learn to fear;

but it was omitted in the copy which accompanied the play, either from Goldsmith's or Johnson's caution, but probably the former. Johnson, mentioning the author in the prologue, had styled him "our *little* bard," but the pride of Goldsmith revolted at this epithet, and it was changed to "*anxious*."

I mentioned these alterations to Mr. Malone, who regretted that he had not known of them before, as he might have introduced them into a new edition of "Boswell's Life of Johnson," to illustrate Goldsmith's character. By the way, just as the first quarto edition of that most amusing biography was on the eve of publication, I met the elder James Boswell, the biographer, who took the title-page out of his pocket, and asked me what I thought of it. It began, "The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. containing," &c. I objected to the word containing, as more appropriate to an advertisement for a lost trunk, as "*containing*," &c. He asked me what word I would substitute. I proposed "comprehending."—"Stay," said he, seeing Sir Archibald Macdonald at a little distance, to whom he ran with the paper in his hand, and pointing to me, consulted Sir Archibald on the proposed alteration. He then returned to me, and said, "You are right, the word shall be adopted." On the publication of the work, he sent the two volumes to me. It was an unfailing joke with me afterward, when I met him, to ask him when *we* should bring out another edition of *our* immortal work; and his son, my excellent friend James Boswell, relished the same jocular allusion to himself as editor of the work.

JOHN WILKES. I knew Mr. Wilkes, but was too young at the time to be admitted into any intimacy with him, even if I had then felt any turn for politics. I however saw enough of him to be convinced that he was irritable and passionate. I was better acquainted with his brother, Heaton Wilkes, a very good kind of man, but by no means calculated to take any conspicuous part in public life, though his brother once thought that he should be able to procure for him the chamberlainship of the city, a situation which he afterward was glad to obtain for himself.

Soon after the death of John Wilkes, Heaton told me that he had not long before asked him for the loan of twenty pounds, but was refused, though at that time John occupied a house in Grosvenor-square, and maintained an establishment corresponding with the situation. He added, that his brother had left all his property to his daughter, and that if she died and made no provision for him, he should be in a destitute situation. Yet John Wilkes was a friend to the people, though he forgot to include his brother among them.

John Wilkes had certainly written two biographical works, which

he intended for publication after his death. One of them was an account of his private, and the other of his political life; but his daughter devoted them to the flames, as if she thought there was nothing in the character of her father worth recording. Wilkes had a natural son, whom I knew. His father sent him for education to Germany, and he came back so completely Germanised, that he must have been taken through life for a foreigner. He went by the name of Smith, and his father procured for him a military appointment in the service of the East India Company. He was a good sort of young man, inclined to boisterous mirth, but without any promising abilities.

The last time I met Mr. Wilkes I inquired after Smith, who I said I had heard was at *Seringapatam*. "Yes," said Wilkes, "he was, when I last heard of him, at *Seringapatam*,"—thus somewhat rudely differing from the pronunciation which I had adopted according to general usage.

I was present at his last unsuccessful attempt for the representation of Middlesex. He was speaking softly to me about the progress of the poll, as we were standing on the hustings at Brentford, and happening to ask him if he thought he had been extensive enough in his canvass, he raised his voice in a most ungentlemanlike manner, and in very passionate tones told me that I was damping his cause. He however soon recovered his temper, and talked to me as before, but not on the subject of the pending election. It is astonishing that a man of his learning and taste should have indulged himself in such cold-blooded profligacy as he exhibited in his licentious parody of "The Essay on Man." It is difficult to conceive what gratification a mind erudite and intelligent as that of Wilkes, could derive from such a low and despicable amusement, particularly as all his political pursuits for personal advantage, and all his contentions with individuals, especially with Mr. Horne Tooke, as well as his luxurious indulgence in private life, had never weaned him from literature.

He had long meditated the publication of a correct edition of "Catullus," which he at length brought out, and which was generally admitted to evince his taste and scholarship. To show that his respect for learning and talents was not overborne by political animosity, when the work came forward, Mr. Horne Tooke informed me that he sent a copy to him. In his public controversy with that sturdy adversary, he certainly appeared to most advantage. Tooke's letters were rancorous and dull in comparison with the lightness, spirit, and gayety of his competitor's. Wilkes was conscious that "Nature had not formed him in her prodigality," but he used to say that the handsomest man could only be rated at a fortnight before him when courting the smiles of the ladies. His wit and humour were admirable, and a strong proof of their influence is, that they could triumph over the impression of his person. Those qualities however cannot throw a veil over the profligacy of his life, the looseness of his morals, and the freedom of his political principles,—for he was, unquestionably, not merely a whig, but a republican.



The late Mr. John Palmer, member for Bath, told me that he passed a few days with Wilkes in the Isle of Wight. On one occasion Mr. Palmer at dinner spoke highly of some pigeons on the table, as of an extraordinary size. Wilkes gave the following account of them. "I was particularly fond of pigeons," said he, "and wanted to encourage a fine breed. I procured some from France and other places on the Continent, but, having taken all possible pains to render their reception agreeable, after a short time they returned to their native place. At length I despaired of ever possessing a breed of my favourite bird, when a friend advised me to try Scotland. I did so, and the pigeons that you admire, of which I procured a large stock, have never returned to their own country."—Perhaps the illiberal hatred of Scotland which he entertained in common with Dr. Johnson, a feeling unworthy and disgraceful to both, was one of the reasons why the great moralist consented to be acquainted with him.

There are many proofs of Wilkes's wit, which are too well known to be introduced in this place. The following, however, I believe, have not publicly appeared. A lady once asked him to take a hand at whist, but he declined in the following terms, "Dear lady, do not ask me, for I am so ignorant that I cannot distinguish the difference between a *king* and a *knave*!" Here the republican tendency of his feelings is manifest.

In a dispute between Sir Watkin Lewes and himself, the former said, "I'll be your butt no longer." "With all my heart," said Wilkes, "I never like an *empty one*."

It was generally rumoured at the time, that Wilkes wrote an answer to a satirical letter to Sir Watkin from Horne Tooke, when Sir Watkin was sheriff. The answer concluded as follows: "It only remains, sir, for me, in my office of sheriff, to attend you to that fate which you have long deserved, and which the people have impatiently expected."

Wilkes was among the persons who were suspected to be Junius, but though witty, pleasant, and humorous, he never could soar to the dignified height of the great inscrutable censor of the times, who threw firebrands among all ranks without distinction or remorse. Upon another occasion he displayed his sarcastic humour on royalty, for he said "he loved the king (George the Third) so much, that he hoped never to see another."

Upon having a snuff-box presented to him to take a pinch, he said, "No, sir, I thank you, I have no *small vices*."

One evening, when the House of Commons was going to adjourn, he begged permission to make a speech, "for," said he, "I have sent a copy to the 'Public Advertiser,' and how ridiculous should I appear if it were published without having been delivered."

When he was member for Aylesbury, he invited the mayor to visit him in London, promising him a hospitable reception. The mayor, who had never been in the metropolis, declined the invitation, alleging that he had heard London "contained nothing but rogues

and prostitutes." Wilkes, with a confidential air, said, "Why, to tell you the truth, Mr. Mayor, I have reason to believe that there are in London a few suspected characters."

The last time I met Wilkes was in Holborn, when I resided in Hatton Garden, the scene of my infant days, and of all my youthful enjoyments. I expressed my surprise at seeing him in that street, as his usual course home to Knightsbridge or to Grosvenor-square, was through Cheapside and the Strand, and I asked him if he had been at his old friend Horne Tooke's trial, which was then proceeding. His answer, from the loss of teeth, was not intelligible; and making a motion as if I was prevented from hearing, by the noise of passing carriages, he repeated the same sounds, which, receiving as if I understood him, I found on reflection were, "Forbid it, delicacy."

Wilkes was certainly a brave, learned, and witty man, but his patriotism was a mere trade for power and profit. My friend Joe Richardson used ludicrously to say, that he had "an affectionate contempt for Wilkes." I was quite a boy when Wilkes was imprisoned in the King's Bench, and was on the ground of St. George's Fields when young Allen was shot, little thinking that I should live to be acquainted with the favourite of the mob.

The mob collected in vast numbers every day before his window in the King's Bench, and the loudest acclamations arose whenever he appeared before them. There was certainly nothing respectable in Wilkes but his determined spirit, his talents, and his erudition. He was said to be elegant in his manners, but in reality he was irritable in his temper, and, at times, rude in his behaviour.

---

## CHAPTER X.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM. I once, and only once, saw this noble statesman, happening to be present in the House of Lords when he appeared there for the last time. Earl Temple came first, and a whisper quickly spread among the people before the bar, importing that "as the jackal was come, the lion might soon be expected." The venerable Earl of Chatham arrived soon after. He was dressed in a suit of black, which by no means appeared to be new. There was nothing remarkably dignified in his form altogether, but, old as he appeared, there was a grandeur in his features, though they evidently indicated the languor of sickness. He arose feebly, and his speech at first was weak, but became stronger as he proceeded. The subject was our war with America. Young as I was, I was struck by the force of his language and the variety of his expressions. He said, "Have we resisted Gallic invasions, Scottish irruptions, British insurrections, Danish intrusions, Irish rebellions," and mentioned other attacks upon this country, varying his epithets on every similar occa-



sion. I accompanied my friend Mr. Richardson at this time, and we both agreed as to the several terms which he had adopted.

When he had closed his speech, apparently more from fatigue than from having fully expressed his sentiments, the Duke of Richmond rose and answered him with great violence, partly resulting from the warmth of his feelings, and partly, as it seemed to me, from vexation that, for want of oratorical fertility, he was frequently obliged to pause. He looked at Lord Chatham all the time, and directed all he said particularly to his lordship. The earl, in animadverting on the proposal of acknowledging the independence of our American colonies, had exclaimed emphatically, "Shall we disinherit the Prince of Wales of his hereditary dominions?" This question seemed chiefly to agitate the irritable temper of the Duke of Richmond, who answered with great vehemence, and in the whole of his manner failed to treat the earl with that respect which was due to him for his vast abilities, his eminent services, his high and venerable character, and his advanced time of life.

During the whole of the Duke of Richmond's intemperate, hesitating, and confused harangue, the Earl of Chatham occasionally nodded, not, as I presumed to think at the time, and as I still conceive to have been the case, as if he assented to any thing that had been advanced by the duke, but only in reference to points that he intended to answer. Before, however, the duke had ended his violent philippic, the Earl of Chatham fell back, but was immediately supported by the peers who were near him.

If I may venture to express my own impression of the scene, I should say what, even at this distance of time, I still think, that the indignation of the Earl of Chatham at being assailed in so coarse, vehement, and vulgar a style, by a person so much beneath him in talents, knowledge, experience, and wisdom, operating upon the known irritability of the noble lord's temper, probably increased by age, actually choked him with passion, to which the feebleness of his frame, debilitated also by sickness, gave way. This opinion I communicated to Mr. Richardson, who assured me that he had drawn the same inference.

The attack on the illustrious statesman, even as the scene passed before me, reminded me of the fable which represents the insult offered to the dying lion. I do not presume to question the abilities of the Duke of Richmond, or his public spirit, but he had connected himself much with a certain democratical party at that period, without, perhaps, being sufficiently aware that they did not act upon the pure old whig principles, which really aimed at the preservation of the British constitution without intending to lessen the proper rights and dignity of the throne, but were attempting to establish a republic, of which they expected to become the leaders: though, happily, the example of revolutionary France and the good sense of the country restrained them, or the Duke of Richmond might have found to his cost that he would have sunk with the aristocratical branch of our unrivalled constitution.

As the scene which I have endeavoured to record may be thought to have some historical interest attached to it, I will add a few words on the subject. Many years after this interesting event took place, I was surprised, on seeing the late Mr. Copley's fine picture of the death of the Earl of Chatham, at the accuracy of the representation; and unless the artist had been present, I cannot account for the truth of the arrangement, as it is hardly to be conceived that even he, not being aware of what was likely to be the result, would have viewed the whole with any future consideration of picturesque effect. One circumstance which particularly struck me in the picture was, the position of Lord Mansfield, leaning on the table and looking with apparent indifference on the fainting statesman, while all the rest of the members were crowding towards him with evident eagerness and solicitude. I could not help recollecting at the time the hostility which had long existed between the two noble statesmen, and I even presumed to conceive that Lord Mansfield did not view with regret the probable end of his powerful, and, indeed, irresistible competitor. It is not improper to remark, that the picture is erroneous in one respect, as the peers never debate in their parliamentary robes; but the taste of the artist naturally tended to the picturesque, and, certainly, the scene as he has represented it, appears with more senatorial dignity.

Soon after the French revolution broke out, I became acquainted with a French ecclesiastic, named the Abbé Sechard, who seemed to be deeply interested in that melancholy event, and apprized of all the designs of its leaders. He predicted to me all the successes of the revolutionary armies in France, Italy, and other parts of the European continent. All his predictions were rapidly fulfilled. Happening to be favoured with the attention of a gentleman high in office at that time, I thought it my duty to inform him of what the abbé had said to me, not in confidence, but apparently with a triumphant anticipation of the revolutionary achievements. I ventured to suggest, not as a politician, but as an alarmist, to use my old friend Sheridan's word, that in the present state of things, when the lower orders of people seemed likely to be ensnared by the revolutionary doctrines, and incited by democratical orators to similar measures, it would be wise on the part of government to grant annuities upon liberal terms, in order to render the measure desirable to the people at large, and thereby create a strong and extensive interest in support of the British constitution and government. I took the liberty of remarking, that, as it was a question of security rather than of revenue, the conditions ought to be liberal, even should government derive no advantage from the measure, or even though it should be attended with some expense.

Such a measure was afterward adopted, but it would be ridiculous in me to suppose that my humble suggestion had any weight in producing it, particularly as it was founded upon a principle which never occurred to me, viz. that of receiving only funded stock in the purchase of these government annuities, thereby gradually to diminish



the national debt. The measure answered its purpose till the probability of danger was removed, and the precaution no longer required.

The gentleman to whom I made those communications, and to whom I presumed to offer those suggestions, is no longer in office, but is advanced in rank, and can attest the correctness of my present statement. The Abbé Sechard positively declared that, to his certain knowledge, the last King of France, when Monsieur, had lavished upwards of one hundred thousand pounds upon a favourite mistress, and that his general expenses before the revolution had been marked by similar profusion.

The abbé attended the Duchess of Kingston, on her visit to the Empress of Russia, as a sort of chaplain,—a strange office, as the duchess was never understood to be a Roman Catholic; but from the general tenor of her life, it may be reasonably supposed, that her sense of religion was much upon a par with her regard for decency, as it is well known that she once appeared in a masquerade at Ranelagh, in the character of Iphigenia, almost without the vulgar incumbrance of attire.

What became of the abbé I never heard. He was a very intelligent man, had seen much of the world, was full of anecdotes, very fond of music, and accompanied himself tolerably on the piano-forte. He appeared to be about seventy years of age, but manifested all the ardour of youth when the French revolution became the subject of conversation, and expressed his admiration of its principles with vehemence and the most unguarded freedom. What he said of the extravagance of the late King of France, though he asserted it with apparent sincerity and confidence, was probably much exaggerated; yet it is certain that the pride, arrogance, and dissipation of too many of the French noblesse, in a great degree precipitated the revolution. The privileged orders of society in all countries too frequently treat the general community as inferior beings. The natural consequence is, that some men of high intellectual power arise among the commonalty, men who do not, as Dryden expresses it, see nature "through the spectacle of books," but penetrate into the substance of things, and propagate principles calculated to give a new foundation to society. Such men will be found in all states, and unless the higher orders manifest less arrogance, no country can be secure from revolutionary movements. The free intercourse, however, that prevails in the British empire, between the several gradations of rank, imparts a stability to the British government which is not to be found in any other.

About this time, I became acquainted with the late Lady Wallace, sister of the late Duchess of Gordon. She was a woman of a strong mind, and much disposed to play the part of a politician. I remember sitting with her one night in the pit of the King's Theatre, when she indulged herself in commenting on the revolutionary principles of France, which then seemed to be rapidly spreading over this country. By what I could gather from her discourse, she seemed to think that Mr. Fox and his party supposed those principles would

soon produce the same effects here, and that they were preparing for the event, in expectation that they would be able to maintain the same ascendancy over the people in general, when the British monarchy should be destroyed, as they held over their immediate political adherents. With a sound knowledge of the real tendency of those principles, she observed that Mr. Fox was but a shallow politician if he expected to be one of the rulers of the people when the throne should be overturned. "The probability is," said she, "that while Mr. Fox harangued the mob, for we must not insult the people in general by supposing that his audience would be otherwise than the mob, some sergeant of the army would knock him on the head in the midst of his sputtering elocution."

If I were to give full credit to what Lady Wallace said, I should conclude that she was in the secret of the party, and that they wished, and even endeavoured to promote, the events for which they were making preparation.

That Mr. Burke was evidently of this opinion, his quarrel with Mr. Fox, and subsequent attack upon him, fully demonstrate. Mr. Burke accused him of having sent an ambassador from the party to the court of Russia, to contravene the measures of his own government; and this was a fact which could not be denied. But Mr. Burke did no credit to himself by his condemnation of the measure in question, since at the time it was adopted, he must have been aware of it, and have sanctioned it with his own concurrence, for it is impossible to suppose that what was styled the Fox party, of which he was a leading member, would have ventured upon so important a measure without his knowledge and participation.

His attack upon the Duke of Bedford for objecting to his pension, violent as it was, might be excused on the ground of self-defence; but his reference to the ancestors of his grace, and the means by which they acquired wealth and distinction, was illiberal and mean, and, after all, it would be difficult to show how it had been deserved.

Mr. Burke had previously broken off all connexion with Mr. Sheridan, on account of something which the latter had said on the subject of the French revolution. I remember meeting Mr. Sheridan at the Haymarket Theatre during the time when it was opened for the reception of the Italian singers and dancers, after the destruction of the Opera House, when a room was opened for the higher ranks, taken from an adjoining house, little better than a stable, and lined with green baize to conceal its homely aspect.

His late majesty, when Prince of Wales, used, after the performance, to visit this room, and, in spite of its green baize lining and general homeliness of aspect, was of course followed by all the rank and fashion in the house.

Meeting Mr. Sheridan in this room, and being upon friendly and familiar terms with him, I asked him if there was any likelihood of his being reconciled to Mr. Burke; and with all his acuteness, in order to show how little he knew of the character of the latter, he told me that "matters were coming round," though, from the irritable



and vindictive temper of Mr. Burke, an amicable arrangement was impossible.

Mr. Burke was reputed to be disposed to "melting charity," but the hardness of his nature was evident in his rejection of all friendly overtures on the part of Mr. Fox, who absolutely shed tears in the House of Commons, when he found that an old and apparently an indissoluble friendship was for ever extinguished. My late friend Mr. William Cooke, an old member of the English bar, who brought letters of introduction to Mr. Burke from Ireland in the year 1766, and became intimate with him and his brother Richard, spoke of them both as not entitled to any moral aspect; and the conduct of Mr. Burke towards Mr. Hastings has been often and strenuously imputed to resentment, because the governor-general of India refused to give an appointment of great responsibility to a relation of Mr. Burke, who had been stigmatized for his profligacy at home.

I am afraid that I shall provoke the resentment of the friends and admirers of Mr. Burke by what I have here written, but I cannot forget the almost indecent exultation with which he spoke of our late beloved monarch during his first mental alienation, which excited the sympathy and grief of all ranks of the people. Mr. Burke said in the House of Commons, that "God had hurled him from the throne." This was said of a monarch who afterward recovered and rendered the whole British empire a scene of loyal festivity.

Whatever might be the abstract notions of Mr. Burke on the *sublime* and *beautiful*, it is evident that he was defective in *taste*, for otherwise he would not in the House of Commons, and before the world at large, considering the dissemination of the debates, have indulged in the indecent allusion to "the rinsing of the bottles," and the vulgarity of "three skips," &c. His merits as a politician and an orator cannot be disputed; yet his reflections on the French revolution were too diffuse, and he entered into a formal and elaborate discussion of political theories of government, as promulgated by the sanguinary usurpers of France, evidently too speculative for practice, and only likely to obtain an ephemeral existence with the transitory demagogues who projected them.

Having touched upon the character of Mr. Burke in another place, I shall here drop the subject, except to express my surprise that Dr. Johnson should have held him in such high admiration as to think it necessary to collect all his intellectual powers whenever he was likely to come in competition with him.

Dr. Monsey told me that he placed Mr. Burke in a ludicrous situation soon after the first publication of his work on the "Sublime and Beautiful." The sincerity of the doctor was acknowledged by all who knew him and could estimate his character, but he was a matter-of-fact man, and only solicitous for practical and useful truths. Meeting Mr. Burke, I believe at Mrs. Montague's, he said with his usual blunt sincerity, "Mr. Burke, I have read your work on the Sublime, but I don't understand it—to me it appears to be nothing but 'about it goddess, and about it.'—What do you mean by sub-

lime? it seems to me inconsistent with nature and common sense." The company looked on Mr. Burke, anxious for his answer. The doctor said he seemed to be a little puzzled and embarrassed, and only said in answer, "There is certainly a sublime in nature, though I cannot at once define it."

Upon the appointment of Mr. Burke, as paymaster, Dr. Monsey wrote a friendly and facetious letter to him. I saw Mr. Burke's answer at the time. It was elegant, playful, and friendly. It principally turned upon the fertility of the doctor's fancy at his advanced time of life, which, as well as I can recollect, was beyond his ninetyeth year. The doctor wrote a similar letter to the celebrated Charles Townshend, brother of Lord Townshend, on his being admitted into the administration, and I remember that the answer of that witty statesman was full of humour and expressions of friendship. Dr. Monsey had letters from the most distinguished characters of his time, which would be a valuable treasure in the present age of autographical zeal and solicitude.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

FRANCIS NORTH, Earl of Guildford. This nobleman was one of the most facetious, pleasant, and humorous characters I ever knew. When I had first the pleasure of being introduced to him, his father and elder brother were alive, and he was distinguished among his friends by the familiar designation of Frank North. In point of size and pleasantry, he quite realized the idea of Falstaff. He was intimately acquainted with the present General Phipps, George Colman the younger, John Kemble, and other conspicuous characters of the time. He is the frolicsome hero of one of my friend Colman's sportive tales, where he is described as having roused a medical man at midnight, who had inscribed upon the side of his door, "Please to ring the bell." The story is so well known that it is only necessary to refer to it, and they who have not read it have a great pleasure to come.

Frank North went abroad for a year or two, and on his return became Earl of Guildford, by the death of his elder brother. During his absence he laid a wager that he would write a dramatic piece within a given time. The piece was written and sent to this country, consigned to his friend Colman, then proprietor and manager of the Haymarket Theatre, and was brought out there under the title of "The English Baron." The wager was for a hundred pounds, which the author of course won.

Soon after he became Earl of Guildford I met him, and he saluted me in his usual free, open, and good-humoured manner. "Before I answer," said I, "I must know whether I am speaking to Frank



North or to Lord Guildford?"—"Oh! Frank North for ever, among old friends," said he, and we renewed our intercourse, as far as the difference of our ranks admitted, for the remainder of his life. Before he became an earl he held an appointment under Mr. Pitt, then lord warden of the cinque ports, and his duty was to be present at Walmer Castle, in order to receive Mr. Pitt, when the great statesman took possession of the place. On this occasion he took with him as a companion a person who acted in a subordinate situation with the Fox party, and was chiefly employed in collecting the parliamentary friends of Mr. Fox when the opposition had any favourite measure to support in the House of Commons. This person was a man without education or intellectual powers, but had seen much of life, and related vulgar stories with some humour; when he failed in language, he generally supplied the deficiency with winks, nods, and other significant gestures.

Frank North used to describe him as the great Lord Mansfield described a dull companion, when a friend expressed his surprise that his lordship should be so intimate with so barren a visiter. "Why," said Lord Mansfield, "I use him as a couch to rest my mind upon, when I am fatigued with thinking, and disinclined to all farther intellectual labour." Such was the manner in which Frank North spoke of his companion, except that he derived amusement from the blunders of this humble friend, and I seldom had the pleasure of meeting him that he did not detain me a few minutes to relate some of those blunders.

His manner of describing what passed at the interview when he officially received Mr. Pitt as lord warden, was so humorous and so characteristic, that I am always diverted with the recollection. He said that he introduced his humble friend to Mr. Pitt as Colonel —, though he had reason to believe the statesman was well acquainted with the person and real situation of the man, from his constant attendance at the House of Commons, as an humble servant of the Fox party. Mr. Pitt staid to partake of a dinner which had been provided for him, and the pseudo-colonel was one of the party. Mr. North said that it was impossible for him to describe the devotion which the *colonel* paid to Mr. Pitt, who occasionally directed his attention to the colonel. The colonel then bowed, as if he were in the presence of some being above the race of mankind.

Mr. North said, that whenever Mr. Pitt pronounced the word colonel, there was a sort of subtle sarcasm in his tone which fully indicated that he was aware of the colonel's military character; but when Mr. Pitt asked the colonel to take a glass of wine with him, the reverence of the latter mounted to such a height that he seemed to be almost bereft of his senses on receiving so great an honour. At length Mr. Pitt left the party on his return to town. For some time the colonel seemed to be absorbed in meditation, as if an important matter engrossed his whole faculties. However, after some hesitation and apparent difficulty to develop his feelings, he suddenly exclaimed, "What extraordinary things happen in this life!—

could I ever think that I should live to shake hands with *that fellow*?" According to Frank North's interpretation, he was afraid that having dined in company with Mr. Pitt, and shown such reverence to their great political adversary, the story might reach the ears of his patrons, the Foxites, in town, and bring suspicion on his political rectitude and consistency.

Such was the story as related by Frank North, with admirable humour, and which was too good to be concealed from the Foxites, who made allowance for the consternation of the *colonel*, and did not the less confide in his *political sincerity*.

As might be expected, the feelings of an author arose in the mind of honest Frank after our mutual greetings on his arrival in town; and his first question was whether I had attended the representation of his play. I told him the fact without any colouring, viz. that the characters were well cast, and well represented; that in scenic decoration, it was brought forward in a manner creditable to the piece, and to the manager as his friend, and had been well received by the audience; finally, that, considering it to be a hasty building upon a whimsical foundation, it manifested a power of doing something better with time and attention. He was gratified with this account, which was confirmed by the testimony of other friends.\*

Honest Frank! his death was a loss to many friends, and his familiar ease was no abatement to the dignity of his rank. As far as his fortune would enable him, he would have kept up all the hospitable spirit of the ancient nobility; and without aristocratical pride, would have held forth an example to his equals, and diffused good-humour around him, to the full extent of his property and influence. His talents, knowledge, and manners endeared him to all his friends, from the studiously grave John Kemble to the exuberantly vivacious George Colman.

Mr. JOHN KEMBLE. I became acquainted with this gentleman in the first season of his performance in London, at Drury-lane Theatre. I attended his first appearance, which was in the character of Hamlet. It was impossible to avoid being struck with his person and demeanour, though the latter was in general too stately and formal; but, perhaps, it only appeared so to me, as I had seen Garrick perform the same character several times a few years before, and had a vivid recollection of his excellence. There was some novelty in Mr. Kemble's delivery of certain passages, but they appeared to me to be rather the refinement of critical research, than the sympathetic ardour of congenial feelings with the author. I sat on the third row of the pit, close to my old friend Peregrine Phillips, the father of Mrs. Crouch. Phillips was enthusiastic in his admiration and applause, upon every expression and attitude of Kemble, even

\* My late worthy friend Michael Kelly, in his pleasant *Reminiscences*, says, that on the first night of this play he went behind the scenes, and was introduced to the author; but the introduction must have been on another occasion, as the author did not return to England till a year or two after the representation, as I have above stated.



to a fatiguing excess. When Kemble had dismissed one of the court spies sent to watch him, and kept back the other, Phillips exclaimed, "Oh! fine, fine." "It may be very fine," said I, "but what does it mean, my friend?" "Oh!" he answered, "I know not what it means, but it is fine and grand." The enthusiasm of my old friend may be accounted for from a report which prevailed at the time. Miss Phillips, his daughter, was very beautiful, and it was said that while Mr. Kemble was at Liverpool, immediately preceding his engagement in London, it had appeared as if a marriage between them were approaching, and the father was, therefore, naturally strenuous in supporting his expected son-in-law. However, the match, if ever intended, did not take place, and Phillips, I suppose, felt an abatement of his admiration of the actor.

I knew Miss Phillips before she appeared on the stage, and a more beautiful and interesting girl, then about fifteen, I have never since known. I continued my acquaintance with her till her death, and whatever might be the events of her life, I had never any reason to alter my opinion of her intrinsic worth. She was a very pleasing actress, and sung with pathos and effect. Her merit in the part which she performed in the comedy of "The Heiress," and in my excellent friend Prince Hoare's humorous afterpiece, "No Song no Supper," was all that criticism could require.

I was, at first, so little an admirer of John Kemble's performance of "Hamlet," that considering it stiff, conceited, and unnatural, I wrote four epigrams in ironical commendation of it, and inserted them together in a public print which I then conducted. The late Mr. Francis Twiss, who took a strong interest in the welfare of Mr. Kemble, introduced me to him in the lobby of Drury-lane Theatre. I had just before seen him point Kemble's notice to me, and heard him whisper the word epigrams: I was, therefore, not prepared for the unaffected civility with which he addressed me. We immediately fell into conversation, and I remember that Mr. Kemble very soon began a defence of declamation, stating it as originally constituting one of the chief features of theatrical excellence on the Grecian stage; whence, on reflection, I inferred that he thought I was disposed to require too much of the manners of familiar life in dramatic representations. From that time we often met in company, became well acquainted, and, judging from myself, our intercourse gradually ripened into what is commonly denominated friendship. I am convinced that if he had been born to affluence, and in a higher station, he would have been a distinguished character in political life. He had suffered the privations naturally incidental to a connexion with a provincial theatre; but when he rose to reputation and fortune in the metropolis, he acted with a spirit and liberality that seemed as if he were "to the manner born."

The late Mr. William Lewis, himself an excellent comic actor and a shrewd judge of theatrical merit, told me that as he once passed through an obscure town in Yorkshire, to perform as "*a star*," he saw John Kemble in the part of "Lovewell," in "The Clandestine

Marriage," ill-dressed for the character, with antiquated finery, unsuitable to a merchant's clerk, and with black unpowdered hair; yet, notwithstanding the stiffness of his deportment, he displayed so much good sense and judgment, that Mr. Lewis assured me he silently predicted Mr. Kemble would rise into theatrical distinction.

Mr. Kemble's classical and general knowledge, and the courtesy of his manners, as well as his improving theatrical powers, soon procured him high and extensive connexions. He kept a hospitable and elegant table. He gave a liberal premium with one of his nephews to an eminent artist, and an equal sum with another to a solicitor. When the late Mr. Francis Twiss had compiled an index to Shakspeare, a work of marvellous industry and labour, and, of course, valuable to the admirers of the great bard, but was not willing to hazard the expense of publication, Mr. Kemble, with the zeal of friendship, and admiration of the poet, determined that so interesting a work should not be buried in obscurity, and engaged with the bookseller at his own risk. He however instituted a subscription among his friends at two guineas for each copy; but though, no doubt, he collected a considerable sum, it was probably by no means sufficient to indemnify him for the expense of a publication of so very arduous and complicated a description. I hardly need add, that I became one of the earliest subscribers. A great part of this laborious work, which, most probably, will never be reprinted, was destroyed by an accidental fire, so that the remaining copies have been much advanced in price.

I was in the habit of constantly visiting Mr. Kemble on a Sunday morning for many years, and if I saw him in the intermediate days, he always said, "Taylor, remember the hebdomadal." I found him generally with some book or manuscript before him relative to his art. Sometimes he was cold, negligent, and less courteous than at others, and then feeling disgusted, I resolved to forbear my visit the next week, but the pleasure I always found in his company overcame my temporary spleen. He was fond of Dryden, and sometimes read to me passages from that admirable poet. I do not think he was a good reader, for he generally read in a tone either too low or too high. There is obviously but one tone in reading or acting that excites the sympathy of the hearer, and that is the tone which feeling suggests and expresses; and such was the charm of Garrick, which rendered his acting in tragedy or comedy impressive in the highest degree.\* There were many of Kemble's visitors who made court to him by telling him of faults in Garrick's acting, or of the unsuitableness of his person for some of the characters which he represented; for instance, Sir Charles Thompson, afterwards Hotham, a respectable old baronet, told Kemble that Garrick always gave him the idea of a little butler. Kemble generally told me what was said

\* Dr. Wolcot used to read his own compositions, and the comic productions of others, with admirable ease, humour, and spirit, but he read all grave poems with a kind of ludicrous quaintness and familiarity. He was, however, a sound critic on other readers.



to him of this kind, not as appearing to believe such remarks, but to know whether they received a confirmation from me. On such occasions, I never abated in my reverence for Garrick, but always discountenanced such insidious flattery, and to the best of my recollection and ability, asserted the wonderful powers of the departed actor. Kemble always listened to my panegyric on his great predecessor with apparent conviction, but I cannot help believing that he would have liked me much better if I had never seen Garrick.

Kemble, with all his professional judgment, skill, and experience, like all other mortals, was sometimes induced to mistake the natural direction of his powers, and to suppose that he was as much patronized by the comic as by the tragic muse. When I called on him one morning, he was sitting in his great chair with his nightcap on, and, as he told me, cased in flannel. Immediately after the customary salutation, he said, "Taylor, I am studying a new part in a popular comedy, and I should like to know your opinion as to the manner in which I am likely to perform it." "As you tell me it is a comic part," said I, "I presume it is what you style intellectual comedy, such as the chief characters in Congreve, Wycherley, and Vanburgh." "What do you think," said he, "of Charles, in the 'School for Scandal?'" "Why," said I, "Charles is a gay, free, spirited, convivial fellow." "Yes," said he, "but Charles is a gentleman." He tried the part, but his gayety did not seem to the town to be of "the right flavour." It was said by one of Mr. Kemble's favourite critics in a public print, that his performance was "Charles's restoration," and by another, that it was rather "Charles's martyrdom."

Another time he attempted a jovial, rakish character in one of Mrs. Behn's licentious comedies, from which, however, he expunged all the offensive passages; but he was not successful.\* I met him one day as I was hurrying home to dress for dinner abroad, and he strongly pressed me to go and dine with him, alleging that as *Pop* (Mrs. Kemble) was out of town, he should be lonely and dull. I told him I was positively engaged, and should hardly be in time. "Well, then," said he, "I'll go home and study a pantomime." It is

\* Kemble certainly believed that he possessed comic talents, and as far as a strong sense of humour and a disposition to enjoy jocularity could tend to excite such a conviction, he might naturally yield to self-deception. My lively friend George Colman, whose exuberant gayety spares nobody, and to whose satirical turn I have often been a witness and a victim, being asked his opinion of Kemble's "Don Felix," said that it displayed too much of the Don and too little of the Felix. Kemble could bear jocular remarks on his acting with unaffected good-humour. I remember that after we became tolerably well acquainted, and were one day talking on the subject of his Hamlet, I perhaps too freely said, "Come, Kemble, I'll give an imitation of your Hamlet." "I'll be glad," said he, "to improve by the reflection." I then raised my right hand over my forehead, as connoisseurs do when looking at a picture, and looking intently as if some object was actually before me, and referring to the platform scene, exclaimed, "My father," and then bending my hand into the form of an opera-glass, and peeping through it, continued, "Methinks I see my father." He took this freedom in good part, and only said, "Why, Taylor, I never used such an action." "No," said I, "but from your first action everybody expected that the other would follow." Whenever he spoke of his great predecessor, he never failed to say "Mr. Garrick."

hardly possible to conceive so grave a character contemplating new tricks and escapes for harlequin, and blunders for the clown.

He had determined to act Falstaff, and I was in the green-room at Covent Garden theatre one Saturday, when, after his performance of some character which I do not recollect, three beards were brought to him, that he might choose one for Falstaff. We were invited to dine the next day with the late Dr. Charles Burney, rector of Deptford. Kemble took me in his chariot, and we talked on the road of his intended Falstaff. He said that he had resolved to attempt the part, but was afraid that when "he came to the point his heart would fail him." A ludicrous incident happened at this dinner. The doctor, in helping Kemble to part of a pudding, gave him a very large portion, which induced me to say, "Burney, you do not observe Kemble's rule in your ample allotment to him." "What is that?" said the doctor. "Why," said I, "when I last dined with him, I was as lavish as you in distributing a similar dish. Kemble said, 'Taylor, don't help so much to an individual, for if you do it will not go round the table.'" Being somewhat in the habit of imitating Kemble, I spoke these words in his manner, forgetting that he was before me. "Now," said Kemble, "he thinks he is imitating me—I appeal to the lady;" and these words he delivered so much in the manner which I had assumed, that Mrs. Burney and the doctor could not help laughing, Kemble gave way to the same impulse, and I was relieved from embarrassment.

I was one night in a box with him when the theatre was illuminated preparatory to the opening for the season, and a Mr. Rees was employed to give imitations, in order to try the effect of the voice. Kemble was one of the persons imitated, and while the man was delivering an imitation of him, Kemble, in little above a whisper, knocking his stick on the ground, said, with perfect good-humour, "Speak louder, you rascal, speak louder." The man did not hear, nor did Kemble intend he should.

Before the return of Mrs. Kemble from the country, I dined with him one day *tête-à-tête*, and a very pleasant evening I passed. I submitted to him my tale of Frank Hayman, on which he made some judicious corrections in writing, on the spot, and afterward read to me his translation of Ovid's epistle from CEnone to Paris, which, so far as I could judge by mere recitation, was rendered with poetic spirit and beauty. He told me that he intended to publish it, with graphic illustrations by his friend Sir Thomas Lawrence. It is to be regretted that it was not published, as it would do honour to his memory. He held Sir Thomas Lawrence in the highest esteem and friendship, and these feelings were evidently returned in full measure by the great artist, as by the many portraits which he painted of Mr. Kemble, it is obvious that his time and talents might have been employed to much pecuniary advantage, while they were thus devoted to friendship. I believe no friendship which history has recorded, was more sincere and warm than that between the great painter and the great actor,—both with minds well stored, both men of correct taste and polished manners.



Mr. Kemble possessed a high and manly spirit. He was involved in a duel with Mr. Daly, the manager of the Dublin theatre, before he first came to London; and another with Mr. James Aikin, a respectable actor of Drury-lane theatre, when Mr. Kemble was manager. Aikin, though a sensible and worthy man, was irritable and obstinate. Mr. Kemble might easily have avoided the last duel, but would not suffer his spirit to be called in question.

The late Hon. Mr. St. John had written a tragedy entitled "Mary Queen of Scots," which he had submitted to the Drury-lane manager, and which had been accepted for representation; but the anxiety of the author induced him to complain of delay in bringing it before the public. Some hasty words passed in the green-room on the occasion between him and Mr. Kemble. At length, in the irritation of literary vanity and aristocratic pride, he told Mr. Kemble that he was a man whom "he could not call out." Mr. Kemble answered with perfect coolness, "But you are a man whom I can turn out, and therefore I desire you will leave this place immediately." Mr. St. John prudently retired, but, reflecting on the insult which he had offered to a scholar and a gentleman, soon returned and made an apology, which restored good-humour, and the play was soon afterward represented, but not with much success.

It was a common trick with Tickel, when supping at a coffee-house with a friend, to quit the room upon some pretence for a few moments, and leave the friend to pay the reckoning. I met him and Joe Richardson one night in the Piazza at Covent Garden, and they insisted on my going with them into the coffee-house to take a few oysters. I readily complied, but reflecting that I had only a few shillings in my pocket, and fully aware of Tickel's practice, I kept watch over him, that I might run no hazard. At length, remaining till a very late hour, as might naturally be expected with men of such talents, I desired my friend Richardson to pay my share, and retreated. This habit was certainly not the effect of meanness or of parsimony in Tickel, but of a waggish humour, by which I should assuredly have suffered, as it would have been an additional pleasure to play it off on a novice.

I was well acquainted with the characters both of Tickel and Sheridan. It was supposed by some of their friends, though not of the most discerning, that Sheridan was jealous of the conversational powers of Tickel. If there really was any jealousy between them, which I sincerely hope was not the case, as they were originally warm friends, besides being connected by marrying two amiable sisters, the jealousy was more likely to be on the side of Tickel, as he had failed in an opera, entitled "The Carnival of Venice," and Sheridan had been successful in all his dramatic pieces, which are styled what are called stock-plays, and had, moreover, become one of the chief national characters as an orator and a politician. Besides, Sheridan's poetical genius was of a higher cast, as evinced in his "Monody on the death of Garrick," and his admirable prologues and epilogues, which are equal to any in our language. It is not, however, to be inferred, that though Sheridan's powers were of a superior order, Tickel was not

possessed of considerable talents,—in fact, that he was not a man of genius. He displayed great wit, humour, and an appropriate delineation and characteristic diversity of character in his “Anticipation,” and poetical spirit in his “Wreath of Fashion,” and more in his “Charles Fox, partridge-shooting, to John Townshend, cruising.” He was peculiarly spirited and entertaining in conversation.

A whimsical circumstance, exemplifying this last quality, occurred during a short visit which he paid at Oxford, to the head of one of the colleges. Dining in the common room, and happening to be more than ordinarily facetious, a very old member of the university, whose mind had been impaired by study and time, and who was very deaf, observing the effect of his lively sallies on the company, and hearing that his name was Tickel, asked the gentleman who sat next to him, and who was a wag, whether that was the Mr. Tickel who had been the friend of Mr. Addison. The gentleman told him it was the same person. The old member then expressed great regret that he sat at such a distance, and was too deaf to hear the brilliant effusions of Mr. Tickel’s genius, particularly, too, as he might also hear some original anecdotes of his immortal friend the author of “Cato.” The wag, to console him, promised that whenever Mr. Tickel uttered any thing of striking humour, or told an interesting anecdote, he would relate it to him. The wag gave a hint to the company, most of whom happened to be as sportive as himself, of the old member’s misconception in taking the Mr. Tickel present for his grandfather, and promised themselves much entertainment from the mistake. Tickel exerted himself with great gayety to exhibit his genius and learning, and the old member was quite agog to hear what passed. Whenever a laugh was excited by what Tickel said, the old gentleman resorted to his waggish friend to know what he had heard. The wag either invented a *bon mot*, or told a ludicrous incident, which, perhaps, delighted the former even more than if he had heard Tickel’s real effusion. This whimsical entertainment continued till the humour was no longer diverting to the party; and the object of this hardly allowable jocularly retired, proud that he had been in company with the friend of Mr. Addison, but lamenting that he could only profit by his wit and humour at second-hand.

Tickel, though such I believe was not the case, might envy the superior genius of Sheridan, but the latter had no reason to be envious of Tickel. Tickel had more of vanity, Sheridan more of pride. Tickel was perpetually gay and ambitious to shine in society; he was therefore always on the watch for some opportunity of making a brilliant sally, and often succeeded. Sheridan was contented to be easy and observing, and quietly waited till the stream of conversation should bear something worthy of his notice, and give occasion for some appropriate anecdote or sarcastic observation. In telling a story, Sheridan’s terms were selected with so much judgment that the substance and point came forth with full effect, and admitted of no addition or embellishment, and his satirical strokes were shrewd, pointed, and evinced a very unfavourable opinion of mankind. In relating an



anecdote, Tickel was too apt to decorate it with a flourishing luxuriance, and to look round to observe its effect on the company. Sheridan seemed only intent on telling the plain matter of fact, and generally addressed himself to an individual. Tickel seemed desirous of impressing the person whom he addressed with a sense of his sprightliness and fancy. Sheridan, when he spoke to a mere stranger in company, spoke in a kind of confidential manner, that disarmed all awkward feeling, and excited an idea in the hearer that he was deemed worthy of conversation and confidence. This air of confidence on the part of Sheridan rendered his manner irresistible. There had certainly been some difference between Sheridan and Tickel, which even the death of the latter had not subdued in the mind of the former; for, on their return from Richardson's funeral, at which I was present, Sheridan behaved in a manner that indicated the decline of friendship between them.

Tickel could not but have been happy in his first marriage with an accomplished branch of the Linley family, a family distinguished for talents; but he was certainly not so in his second. The lady was a beauty, and brought some fortune. They kept a coach, an extravagance which her fortune and his income as a commissioner of the Stamp-office could not support. His wife expected him to be constantly with her, and when he wanted to take a walk with a friend, she importuned him to ride in the coach with her. At length he became embarrassed in his affairs and desponding in his temper, and he who was once all vivacity, sank into melancholy and dejection, inso-much as to render it doubtful whether his falling from the parapet at Hampton Court Palace was wholly accidental.

It is a melancholy consideration, that almost immediately after his death, a near relation, who had been apprized of his desponding state, came with ample means to relieve him from all his necessities. His chief production was the popular pamphlet entitled "Anticipation," in which he characterized with admirable ingenuity and humour the more conspicuous members of the House of Commons at that period. It was generally supposed that he derived considerable advantage from the hints of Lord North, who possessed great wit and humour.

The second Mrs. Tickel, it is said, found a less indulgent husband in her second marriage, and sank into a despondency like that which attended the last days of her former partner. A beautiful whole-length drawing of her was made by my late friend Cosway, with all the taste and spirit which distinguished his works in miniature, from which there was a correct engraving. This lady was the daughter of a captain in the East India Company's marine, in which service he had amassed about twenty thousand pounds; but, being afraid to vest it in any public securities, he lived upon the capital, which gave Tickel little hopes of deriving much from the death of his father-in-law, and probably augmented that dejection which occasioned the termination of his life.

## CHAPTER XII.

REV. WILLIAM PETERS. With this gentleman I was acquainted in my early days. I was introduced to him by the Rev. Richard Pinnock, rector of Abinger in Surrey, and of St. John's, Bermondsey. He was also chaplain to the Earl of Godolphin, and one of the officers of the British Museum. He was an irritable but an honourable man; a good classical and French scholar. He had a turn for humour and poetry. Whenever I received an invitation to dine with him, it was generally conveyed in rhyme. He lived to a very advanced age, and I joined in the melancholy duty of attending his funeral, with the present Sir John St. Aubin, Bart., and the late Mr. Planta, then chief officer of the British Museum.

I knew Mr. Peters had entered into the church. As an artist, he had gained considerable reputation in portrait-painting. After he became a clergyman, he resigned his situation as a royal academician, conceiving that it would be unsuitable to his clerical function; but on his resignation, he was appointed chaplain to the Royal Academy, which, though a mere nominal office, evinced the respect of the president, the late Sir Joshua Reynolds, and of the council of that institution.

Mr. Peters told me, that besides the propriety of resigning his academical honour, he was induced to relinquish his profession of an artist by the following circumstance: A lady of quality having requested he would recommend her to a good landscape-painter, as she wanted a couple of pictures of that description, he replied, that considering Richard Wilson as the best painter of landscapes, he recommended him. The lady then desired that he would accompany her to the painter's house. He accordingly went with her, and found the artist at home. The lady desired to see some specimens of his skill, and Wilson had luckily not sent home two pictures which he had just finished, and brought them to her. Peters said he was afraid that Wilson's bold style and rough colouring would not be suitable to female taste, and that the lady would not be duly impressed with the grandeur of his conceptions, that he, therefore, placed them at some distance, in order to make them appear to more advantage. The lady, however, happened to be struck with them, and gave him a commission to paint two landscapes, at a liberal price, on subjects chosen by himself. As Peters was going to hand the lady into her carriage, not intending to return with her, Wilson whispered that he wanted to speak to him. Peters, of course, returned with him. Wilson, after thanking him warmly for his kind recommendation, told him he was so distressed, that if Peters would not lend him ten guineas, he could not fulfil the order, as he had no money to buy colours or canvass. Peters promised he would send the money to



him as soon as he reached home. Peters assured me that the distress of this great artist produced a strong effect upon his mind ; for if Wilson, who was decidedly the best painter in his province of art, was so reduced, what must he expect who had so many rivals of distinguished talent in the line of portrait ?

Peters after this began to prepare himself for the church, and entered his name at one of the colleges at Oxford. In this university he became acquainted with the late Mr. William Gifford, whose translations of "Juvenal" and "Persius" prove his learning and poetical vigour, and whose editions of the works of Massinger, of Ben Jonson, and of Ford, may fairly rank him as the best dramatic critic in our language. Mr. Peters, no doubt, improved his classical knowledge, and prepared himself for the sacred calling by the assistance of Mr. Gifford. Mr. Peters and Mr. Gifford remained in intimacy and friendship for some years, but, as Dryden says,

"All human things are subject to decay ;"

and, unhappily, friendship is founded on the same uncertain tenure. At length these friends became bitter enemies ; but before this melancholy event took place, I dined with Mr. Peters at a house in Millbank, which belonged to the late Lord Grosvenor, and in which his lordship permitted him to reside. On this occasion I first met Mr. Gifford, to whom Mr. Peters had expressed a desire to introduce me. What was the immediate cause of the dissension between these old friends I never heard, but their hostility to each other was of the bitterest kind.

When Peters quitted Oxford, he continued to correspond with Gifford, who remained there ; and, to save the expense of postage, Peters obtained franks from Lord Grosvenor for his letters to Gifford, and his lordship permitted the letters of Gifford to pass under cover to his lordship. On one occasion Gifford forgot to seal his letter to Peters, and Lord Grosvenor frankly confessed that he had the curiosity to read it. His lordship was so struck by the literary merit of this letter, that he thought the author would be a proper travelling tutor for his son, the present Lord Grosvenor. He therefore desired Peters to invite Gifford to London, where he soon received an invitation to reside at his lordship's house, in Grosvenor-square. Gifford was shortly appointed tutor to Lord Belgrave, and afterward accompanied his noble pupil abroad.

During the time that Peters and Gifford remained in friendship, the former considered the unsealed letter as an accident, but when they quarrelled, he represented it to me as an artifice, by which Gifford thought to tempt the curiosity of Lord Grosvenor. He had taken, it seems, uncommon pains with the letter, in order, as Peters alleged, to make a forcible impression on his lordship, and his plan succeeded.

Gifford had become acquainted with Mr. Hoppner the painter, and had introduced him at Grosvenor House. This circumstance, no doubt, must have displeased Peters, who knew that Hoppner was of

a very satirical turn, and spared nobody. What hastened the extinction of the friendship between Peters and Gifford I know not, except that Gifford and Hoppner, as Peters said, had undermined him in the estimation of Lord Grosvenor, and forced him to relinquish his connexion with his lordship. At length there was an open rupture between the former friends.

Gifford was accused by Peters of having, in a public newspaper, ridiculed his pictures in the Royal Academy exhibition, assisted by the professional suggestions of Hoppner. I remember to have read a critique of this description, on a picture of Adam and Eve in Paradise, which was remarkably humorous and severe. Mr. Combe, who was a friend to both parties, at length interfered to prevent further hostilities, but failing, he signified that unless Lord Grosvenor put a stop to this persecution of his old friend Peters, he would write an heroic epistle to Lord Grosvenor from his repudiated lady. As Mr. Combe was known to possess a powerful pen, and was a zealous friend to Peters, this intimation was conveyed to his lordship, who then interposed, and requested that all this literary warfare should end, and from that time they were contented to abuse each other in private.

By this time I had become very well acquainted with Gifford, and frequently heard the complaints of both parties. It was curious to find that their accusations against each other were exactly the same. They each charged the other with mean and disgraceful subserviency to the vices of Lord Grosvenor. It is certain that Peters, before he took holy orders, and probably while he was not in a very prosperous state, painted some subjects for the noble lord which were far from being of a decorous nature; but who is to blame, the rich man who suggested such subjects, or the poor one who stood in need of his patronage? I have often heard Peters deeply lament that he ever devoted his talents to such subjects, not only because they were degrading to his character, but, as far as I could judge, from sincere moral regret. On the other hand, Peters charged Gifford with a pliant subserviency to those vices of his patron which had dictated the subjects in question. In proof of this charge Peters used to relate a story, which, even if I could believe, I should not think proper to introduce in this place.

I have often, though with caution, sounded both as to the possibility of effecting a reconciliation, but found it a hopeless matter, and therefore never acknowledged to either that I had seen the other, and avoided a subject which was mournful and disgusting.

Mr. Peters being troubled with asthma for some years before his death, was obliged to sleep in the country, so that I very rarely saw him; but soon after his death I received a note from his widow, requesting I would call on her in town, as she had something to communicate to me. I went accordingly, and was informed by her that her husband had left me a legacy of fifty guineas. I was much surprised at this bequest, as I had not seen Mr. Peters for some years, and thought he had forgotten me. His legacy, however, was a proof of his friendly feeling towards me, which had not lessened by absence.



**MR. JOHN HORNE TOOKE.** I was acquainted with this gentleman many years, and always found him polite and good-humoured. I was first introduced to him when he resided in Richmond Buildings, by Mr. Arthur Murphy, and though I did not adopt his political principles, he was too agreeable, and too instructive a companion for me not to cultivate the connexion. He told me, soon after I became acquainted with him, that he knew who Junius was at the time of his public correspondence with him; and when I expressed my surprise that he did not contrive to answer his formidable assailant in a private manner, he declared he became acquainted with him under such circumstances of honourable secrecy, that it would have been treachery in him to avow his knowledge. In his correspondence with Wilkes, after his quarrel with him, he certainly does not appear to much epistolary advantage in comparison, however strong might be his facts, and however cogent his arguments. Wilkes's answers were always playful, sprightly, and humorous. It does not appear that Wilkes provoked him to the attack, but Horne Tooke was too discerning a man not to see that Wilkes was in reality a patriot for his own interest, not for that of the public.

Tooke was certainly a republican, and having discovered Wilkes's interested views, withdrew all confidence from him and became his bitter enemy. Mr. Tooke once advised me, whenever I said any thing that I wished to have kept secret, never to say it in the presence of a third person, "for if," said he, "there were only one person present, and he were to betray you, you might deny all he said, and the testimony of each would then depend upon his own character; and your denial, though untrue, would be a just punishment on your opponent for his treachery."

I once called on him in Richmond Buildings, with Mr. Merry the poet, just as the latter was on the eve of being married to Miss Brunton the actress. In the course of conversation, Mr. Tooke adverted to this intended marriage, and directing his discourse to me, said, "I told this gentleman that I was once as near the danger of matrimony as he is at present, but an old friend to whom I looked with reverence for his wisdom and experience, gave me the following advice. 'You must first,' said he, 'consider the person of the lady, and endeavour to satisfy yourself that if she has excited, she is likely to secure, your admiration. You must deeply scrutinize her mind, reflect whether she possesses a rate of intellect that would be likely to render her an intelligent companion; if you are satisfied she does, you are to examine her temper, and if you find it amiable, and not likely to irritate your own on any occasion, you must proceed to obtain all the information you can procure respecting her parents and other relatives; and if you have no reason to object to their being your relations and companions, you must then inquire who and what are her friends, for you must not expect her to sacrifice all her old connexions when she becomes your wife, and if you find them agreeable people, and not likely to be burdensome or intrusive, and are quite satisfied with the prospect, you may then order your wedding

clothes, and fix the day for the marriage. When the bride is dressed suitable to the occasion, the friends at church, and the priest ready to begin, you should get upon your horse and ride away from the place as fast and as far as your horse could carry you. This counsel," added Mr. Tooke, "from one who was thoroughly acquainted with the world, made me investigate the nature of wedlock; and considering the difficulties attending the advice which he recommended, made me resolve never to enter into the happy state."

This counsel, however, had no effect upon Mr. Merry, who soon after married, though certainly he was solicitous to avoid the match. Mr. Tooke however was a man of gallantry. He had two amiable daughters, with whom I have had the pleasure of being in company, and was assured by the late Dr. George Pearson that they were good Latin scholars. He had also a son, but whose conduct he represented as so different from that of his daughters, that on Mr. Merry asking what had become of him, Mr. Tooke said he did not know, but hoped the next news he should hear of him would be that he was hanged.

It would be presumptuous in me to attempt to measure the mind of Mr. Horne Tooke, but, as far I could venture to judge, he combined logic and waggery so habitually, that he would not have been an eloquent parliamentary orator; as he would rather have endeavoured to detect and ridicule the errors and inconsistencies of others than have proposed any thing original from himself. He told me that when he attended at any political meetings he very seldom went with an intention to speak, but that he as seldom maintained his contemplated silence. I remember once, and only once, I dined with the Revolutionary Society, instituted in a great measure in honour of King William the Third. The celebrated Dr. Price was the chairman on this occasion, and Mr. Horne Tooke sat next to him. In the course of the day, I asked the latter if he intended to address the company. He said "No, I delight in the anniversary of a day intended to celebrate the delivery from monarchical despotism and bigotry, and resign myself wholly to convivial enjoyment." I ventured to hint that something would occur probably which would draw forth his public spirit, and so it happened; for in about an hour something induced him to address the company, when he was answered by my old friend, now Mr. Baron Garrow: I have totally forgotten the subject of their brief controversy, but I remember the jocularly of both excited merriment through the room, and ended in good-humour.

I went afterward into the tea-room with Mr. Tooke, and it was there he suggested to me the cautious policy which I have mentioned above. I believe that this dinner which I attended was the last time the society ever assembled. It once, however, numbered among its members some of the most respectable whig characters in the country, but as they had not taken leave of monarchical principles, when they saw the dreadful excesses which the revolutionary dogmas of France had occasioned, they withdrew from the society, and left it to



the low tavern reformers, who never attempted to muster another meeting.

It has been said that when Mr. Tooke was conveyed by the way of Islington into custody to the Tower, he looked at the fields, and, with tears in eyes, said—"Ah! I am afraid I shall see you no more." These words are so repugnant to the firm and decisive temper of his mind, that it is impossible for those who knew him to give any credit to the report.

The last time I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Horne Tooke was in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he was walking with his daughters. I joined them, and in the course of conversation he said, "I have often invited you to my dinner-parties on Sundays, at Wimbledon, but I know you dare not come." I assured him that I expected too much pleasure on such an occasion to be afraid of appearing there, and that I should take an early opportunity of accompanying my friend Dr. Pearson in his carriage. Something or other, however, always interfered, and I never attended the meetings. Politics must of course have generally been "the order of the day," as Mr. Tooke has more than once told me that in all his conversations, and in all his writings, whatever was the subject, politics were sure to intrude. I have said that I believe he was a republican, and I think the following passage from one of his letters to Junius will justify the suspicion, even were there no other reasons that I could offer in support of it,

"*The right divine and sacredness of kings is to me a senseless jargon. It was thought a daring expression of Oliver Cromwell, in the time of Charles the First, that if he found himself placed opposite to the king in battle, he would discharge his piece into his bosom as soon as into any other man's. I go farther; had I lived in those days, I would not have waited for chance to give me an opportunity of doing my duty; I would have sought him through the ranks, and without the least personal enmity, have discharged my piece into his bosom rather than into any other man's.*"

My late friend Mr. Joseph Richardson told me, that, generally, after a certain baronet had been with Mr. Horne Tooke for a few days, he returned to town with a mind so heated by the principles of that gentleman, that he seemed as if he had been in a political furnace; and it was not till several days had passed that Mr. Fox and his other political associates could bring him again within the sound influence of constitutional whiggism. They however held in great respect the understanding and political principles of the baronet, and attributed his occasional tendency to republican notions wholly to the reasonings and ingenious sophistry of the politician of Wimbledon.

There was such a mixture of humour, waggery, ridicule, archness, and learning in the character of Mr. Tooke, that when he took pains to gain proselytes to his opinions, he was generally successful. In his controversy with Junius, the argument was certainly in his favour, but he proved much inferior in literary talents. Junius had rashly advanced charges against Mr. Horne which he could not support, and therefore he was, of course, conquered in reasoning; but the humour

and ingenuity with which Junius retreats from the contest, demonstrates the superiority of his literary skill.

The two poetical quotations which Mr. Horne introduced into his letter, and for which he is so humorously attacked by Junius, are taken from the works of Ben Jonson, as the late Mr. William Gifford told me, but I have never thought it worth while to trace them in his plays. That admirable artist, Mr. Westall, related to me a circumstance which illustrates the logical waggery which I always observed in Mr. Horne Tooke, and also the vehement irritability of Dr. Parr. He said that he was in company with these distinguished characters, and witnessed a dispute between them. Parr was vehement and loudly declamatory; Tooke was sportive and satirical. Notwithstanding the thundering hostility of Parr, Tooke was serene and jocosely bitter. At length Parr arose, and said, "If I had entertained an opinion which I thought founded on truth, and determined never to abandon—if I thought that your opinion was the same, I would immediately renounce it with detestation."

If Mr. Horne Tooke could have transferred the same jocosely severity to his pen which was so conspicuous and successful on his tongue, he might have equalled if not have conquered Junius, in wit as well as in argument.

I once promised myself a very pleasant and instructive day, having invited Mr. Combe, whom I have before mentioned, and Mr. Horne Tooke, to dine with me. What prevented Mr. Combe from coming I do not recollect, but I believe that a total difference in political principles with Mr. Horne Tooke occasioned his reluctance to meet him. Upon general topics, Mr. Combe would have been highly entertaining, particularly in the abundance of his anecdotes of high life when he mixed in fashionable circles; and Mr. Horne Tooke's general opinion and reflections would have been equally instructive, but as his conversation, however began, invariably led to politics, and might have ended in an unpleasant controversy, it was well that they did not meet. As Mr. Horne Tooke did not keep the engagement, I wrote to him the next day, and after expressing the disappointment which I felt in not having been favoured with his company, I assured him I consoled myself with the idea that he was too much absorbed in some work, intended for the advantage of mankind, to recollect such a trifling concern as an engagement to dinner with an humble friend. I received the following answer, of which I have preserved the original as a curiosity, coming from so extraordinary and conspicuous a character.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

I beg, ten thousand times, your pardon. My house is repairing and my memoranda were all taken down in the dirt and confusion of my parlour; in which confusion I still remain. I completely and



totally forgot my engagement. I feel extremely for the displeasure you must have entertained. I have only the excuse of *Œdipus*—

“My hands are guilty, but my heart is free.”

Again, I beg you to pardon me.

Dear sir,  
Your sorrowful humble servant,  
J. H. TOOKE.

The late Dr. George Pearson was very much attached to Mr. Horne Tooke, and visited him as often as he had opportunity, and thought highly of his character apart from politics, which the doctor told me he always cautiously avoided, though it was difficult, indeed impossible, to restrain Mr. Tooke's tendency to the discussion of such topics. The doctor, however, always contrived to turn the discourse, and give occasion to some wagery, in which he was as ready to indulge his humour, as in political animadversion. Dr. Pearson was generally deemed well read in Latin and Greek, and considered Mr. Tooke as an acute critic and profound scholar.

Mr. Prince Hoare told me that he was once present in company with Mr. Horne Tooke, when he proposed some subject relative to the powers of the human voice; that he separately addressed all the company, requesting their opinions, which he afterward summed up, and then delivered his own, manifesting such perspicuity, as well as comprehensive knowledge, as excited the admiration of all present. Firm as his mind was, like all human beings, he had some odd conceptions, and was at times very irritable. His desire of being buried in his garden was a whim, which his executors prudently rejected, and had him interred according to the ordinary rites of sepulture. I regret to hear that he was so irascible and violent in his temper as death approached, that there were no traces of the philosopher in his conduct, and he was so turbulent that it was painful to go near him, yet perpetually calling for attendance. At length, after a painful illness, he was released from his sufferings, and his attendants ascribed his impatience to the severity of what he endured, which wholly overcame his natural tendency to good-humour.

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD JERNINGHAM, Esq. This gentleman I consider as altogether one of the most amiable and intelligent persons I ever knew. I had admired his poems in general when I had not the least idea that I should ever become acquainted with him. He had received his education chiefly in France, and came to London about the twentieth year of his age, for the purpose of being present at the corona-

tion of King George the Third. His family were Roman Catholics, and he was of the same persuasion. He told me that the first subject which engrossed his attention was the grounds of difference between the Protestants and Roman Catholics, and he therefore read attentively all that the most eminent advocates on both sides had said in support of their respective principles. The result was a firm conviction of the truth of the Protestant faith, to which he conformed; and such were the liberal sentiments of his family, that, as they knew he was not governed by any motives of worldly interest, they indeed regretted, but were not offended at his desertion of their traditional and hereditary religious creed.

He told me that he had been always a great admirer of poetry, and at a very early period had become a votary of the muse; that he therefore had felt great pleasure in bringing from France a letter of introduction to the celebrated Miss Martha Blount, the favourite of Pope. He described her as short, plump, and of rather a florid complexion, agreeable and lively in her manners, but not with such an understanding, or such marks of elegance and high-breeding, as might have been expected in the favourite of so distinguished a poet as Mr. Pope.

Mr. Jerningham was admitted to a familiar intercourse with the great Earl of Chesterfield, who told him that, seeing Miss Blount at a large party one evening when the report of the day had been that Mr. Pope was dead, he made his way to her in the room, and expressed the peculiar pleasure which he felt in seeing her, as her presence contradicted the melancholy rumour of the morning, concluding that if it had been well founded he should certainly not have seen her in that place. When the lady understood the nature of it, she affected some surprise that such a report should be expected to prevent her from visiting her friends, and displayed so much flippant indifference on the subject, that the nobleman, who had a great friendship for Mr. Pope, resented her levity so much that he never spoke to her again. Pope manifested his opinion of Lord Chesterfield by the following couplet on using his lordship's pencil, which ought to have been included in the poet's works.

Accept a miracle instead of wit,  
See two dull lines by Stanhope's pencil writ.

Mr. Jerningham used to dine very frequently with Lord Chesterfield towards the close of that nobleman's life. The dinner-hour was three. The party generally consisted of the earl, his countess, and an old Roman Catholic priest. The lady and the priest were perpetually jangling, chiefly on religious topics. They were both very violent, and though the earl could not hear them, he saw by their gestures that they were engaged in controversy, and used to console himself that there was one advantage in his deafness, as it prevented him from hearing the grounds of their disputes, and consequently from being appealed to as an arbiter by either party. The dispu-



tants paid no regard to his lordship, or to his guest Mr. Jerningham, who, by the assistance of the earl's ear-trumpet, was enabled to converse with him, and described his conversation as a source of the most interesting and instructive observations. Here I may properly introduce a very elegant compliment which Mr. Jerningham paid to Lord Chesterfield in some verses, the whole of which would do honour to these pages. After a general reference to the earl's merits, he thus ingeniously adverts to his deafness:

Though deafness, by a doom severe,  
Steals from thine ear the murmuring rill,  
And Philomel's delightful air,—  
E'en deem not this a partial ill.

Ah! if anew thine ear was strung,  
Awake to every voice around,  
Thy praises, by the many sung,  
Would stun thee with the choral sound.

I had once an opportunity of applying the last line very aptly to the author himself. We were at a concert together in the Hanover-square rooms, when, observing him lean on the orchestra during the performance, I softly asked him if it did not "Stun him with the choral sound." He did not at first recollect the reference, but in a moment turned away with a sort of laughing confusion.

In the prologue to his comedy of "The Welsh Heiress," which I wrote at his desire, I styled him

A modest minstrel of the plaintive choir.

In the four volumes of his works will be found not only many pathetic poems, but several of them characterized by high and heroic sentiments. His poem entitled "The Shakspeare Gallery," that on "The rise and progress of Northern Poetry," that "On Enthusiasm," and, indeed, many others, are marked by such poetical genius as, in my opinion, give him a place among some of our celebrated poets. His works were very popular in the higher circles, particularly with those who added taste and learning to rank and affluence.

Horace Walpole, afterward Lord Orford, complimented him in verse. He was intimate with the late Earl of Harcourt, at whose seat he was a frequent visiter, as well as with the late Earl of Carlisle, with whom he passed some months at Castle Howard. But what, indeed, proves the estimation in which his character and talents were held, is, that he was honoured with an invitation to the Pavilion at Brighton by his late majesty George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales, remained there for two or three weeks, and, by desire of his royal highness, regulated the library.

When Mr. Jerningham published the last collection of his works, he introduced a note to his poem of "Abelard to Eloisa," which I venture to insert, because I was proud of the friendship of such a man, and could not but be highly gratified with his commendation. The note was as follows:—"The following poem has been distin-

guished by a beautiful sonnet, inserted in a volume of poems that does honour to modern poetry, by Mr. Taylor, a gentleman whose commendation is a passport to fame, except where it is directed (as in the present instance) by the amiable bias of friendship." Mr. Jerningham was not merely a gentleman, a scholar, and a poet, but a patriot and a politician. His poem entitled "Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction," written during the time of the French revolution, displays an ardent devotion to his country and the British constitution, as well as a sound knowledge of its principles.

Mr. Burke having been alluded to in the poem, as the great champion of order and good government, says, in a letter to the author, "I read your poem with great pleasure. The conceptions are just, the sentiments affecting, and the pictures forcible and true. I can say that I am not particular in this opinion, nor am I bribed to it by your indulgence to me, your fellow-labourer in the same cause. Mr. Wyndham, I understand (and he has a judgment not to be deceived or corrupted by praise), thinks of your poem as I do. I have the honour to be, with the most sincere regard, dear sir, your most obliged and most faithful servant, Edmund Burke."

This poem, though one of his last, and written at an advanced age by the author, is one of his best and most vigorous productions. Mr. Burke pays him a still higher compliment on his poem of "The Shakspeare Gallery." Speaking of the author, he says, "I have not for a long time seen any thing so well finished. He has caught new fire, by approaching in his *perihelium*, so near to the sun of our poetical system." Dr. Parr was liberal and even profuse in his eulogium on this poem, and more particularly on Mr. Jerningham's poem entitled "Enthusiasm," of which he says, "The general plan of the work is well formed. The imagery is striking, without glare; the texture of the whole style is easy, without feebleness. Almost all the lines flow melodiously. Many of the expressions are wrought up to an exquisite pitch of eloquence, and the debate for and against the claims of the enthusiasts is conducted at once with the perspicuity of argument and the animation of poetry."

Mr. Jerningham always experienced a liberal reception from "The Monthly Review," through the whole of his poetical life, and no unfavourable allusion to him appeared till my late friend William Gifford wrote a couplet in his poem of "The Bæviad," which shows that he certainly was not acquainted with Mr. Jerningham's works, for he speaks of him as a pastoral poet, though Mr. Jerningham has not one pastoral poem in all his numerous productions. The author of "The Pursuits of Literature" also mentioned Mr. Jerningham unfavourably in a parody on a line of Pope. Mr. Jerningham answered them both with manly spirit, in one of the best of his poems. I had the pleasure of bringing Mr. Gifford and Mr. Jerningham together, and of exciting in them kind sentiments towards each other.

I dare say if Mr. Mathias, whom I have long had the pleasure of knowing, was really the author of "The Pursuits of Literature," he, upon reflection, would regret that he attacked a brother bard whose



political sentiments and principles were the same as his own. Here I may say, that in a conversation with Mr. Mathias, who was as well-bred a gentleman as I ever knew, referring to the suspicion and the report that he was the author of the poem in question, he said to me, "They will find out their mistake some time or other." Mr. Mathias presented his tract to me on the subject of the poems attributed to Rowley; and I think he has fairly and fully proved that, however they may have been interpolated by Chatterton, they were not his productions. Mr. Mathias's reasoning is perfectly satisfactory, at least to me. I understand that this gentleman resides at Naples in good health. I hope he will long enjoy it, for the sake of his friends as well as of himself; for his learning, talents, and urbanity must render him the subject of respect, esteem, and admiration, to all who have the pleasure of knowing him.

There is so much spirit in Mr. Jerningham's vindication of his poem, and the allusion to Gray's elegy is so apt, that the following extract may be acceptable to the reader:—

If each bold village Hampden may withstand  
The little tyrant of his little land;  
May not the Muse with equal right maintain  
The long-earn'd honours of her small domain?  
Ye great departed shades! who, when on earth,  
Hail'd with benign applause the Muse's birth;  
O CHESTERFIELD! O CHATHAM's sacred sire!  
O GRAY! thou lord of the enchanting lyre!  
Beneath your fost'ring praise, a lowly Muse  
Smiled, like the flow'ret fed with heavenly dews,  
And shall this flow'ret perish in her noon,  
Beneath the dull-ey'd peasant's clouted shoon?

I have seldom passed so agreeable a day as when I accompanied a lady and Mr. Jerningham on a visit to Mr. Pope's villa at Twickenham, before "the spoiler came," and destroyed every vestige of its interesting state as left by the poet. A rustic lad, when we entered the memorable grotto, pointed to an old deal table, and said with ludicrous simplicity, "There Mr. Pope used to sit and write a copy of verses." There was an impressive solemnity in that part of the grounds which was consecrated to the memory of the poet's mother. Mr. Jerningham, who had often visited the place, abounded with anecdotes of the bard, and with some accounts of his personal habits, which he learned from an old boatman who used to convey Mr. Pope from Twickenham to Richmond.

Towards the decline of life, Mr. Jerningham turned his attention to religious subjects, but without any tendency to fanaticism. His first publication on these subjects was a well-written tract on "The mild Tenour of Christianity," which soon passed through a second edition. He paid me the compliment of writing the following manuscript lines on the blank leaf of the book.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

Unvaried friend, through many a varying year,  
 Indulge the voice that courts religion's muse,  
 Nor thou (to virtue as to science dear)  
 Thy candid audience to my theme refuse.

EDWARD JERNINGHAM.

*March 25, 1807.*

This tract displays extensive reading and research, and is characterized by the same mild spirit which forms the subject. He also published about the same time a translation of "Select Sermons and Funeral Orations" from Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, with an original essay on the "Eloquence of the Pulpit in England." His next work was a tract on "The Dignity of Human Nature." The last of his religious tracts was entitled "The Alexandrian School; or a Narrative of the First Christian Professors in Alexandria." All these tracts were liberally received by the periodical critics, and passed through several editions. With the last work he again addressed me in manuscript in the following words. "To you, my amiable and long-tryed friend, I present my little theological tract. They who have written half so well as you, will read me with less candour." If I am accused of vanity in having inserted these commendatory passages, I can only say that I am proud of such testimonies of friendship from so amiable, intelligent, and learned a character, and have only to regret that I do not deserve them.\*

I had not seen Mr. Jerningham for some time, and at length received a note from him earnestly requesting that I would call on him as early as convenient at night, as he had something particular to say to me. I of course went, and was shocked to hear that he was alarmingly ill. He was in bed, and I attended him in his chamber. Conceiving that an illness of some weeks had very much altered his person, the curtain was drawn before him that I might not be shocked at the change, and I did not see him at this last meeting. He told me that he felt death was approaching, and that he had requested my presence to take a last farewell. As far as I can recollect, the following were his last words.

"I know that when I am no more, you will say something kind of my memory, but I am already dead to all the vanities of this world, and what I desire is, that you will say I was consistent in my religious creed and conduct. I am besieged by some Roman Catholic priests, who are anxious I should return to their persuasion, and, if there were no likelihood of contradiction, they would certainly make no scruple

\* I have above fifty letters which I received from Mr. Jerningham, from which I might extract many passages so favourable to me that I have not courage enough to insert them in this place. Most of these letters are worthy of public attention, as they are characterized by wit, good-humour, taste, descriptive elegance, and moral sentiments, as well as by genuine piety. As a critic, in my humble opinion, he was acute, profound, and liberal. Speaking of translations in one of his letters to me, he says, "Translations are only crutches for those who are lame. I think I should express myself better if I were to say, that reading the original is gathering the fruit from the tree with all its raciness and flavour."



of asserting that I had done so. They would even think it meritorious so to do, for the honour of their religion. All, therefore, that I require of you, as the last testimony of friendship, is, to state in your newspaper that I took the sacrament on Wednesday last according to the rites of the Church of England." He then in the most friendly and affecting terms took leave of me, and died on the following day. After I left him, he ordered a whole-length drawing of himself to be sent to me without delay. I inserted a tribute to his literary and moral character in the Sun newspaper, and added all that he had desired me to say on the consistency of his religious principles. I sent the paper to his nephew, Mr. Edward Jerningham, and apologized for having adverted to the subject of his religion, as his creed differed from that of his family, declaring that I should not have done so if it had not been in compliance with his uncle's last solemn desire. The gentleman called on me, to thank me for the tribute which I had paid to the memory of his uncle, and readily admitted that I had properly discharged the last duty of friendship.

I wrote to Mr. Combe, whose literary character I have previously noticed, and who was one of Mr. Jerningham's oldest friends, to give him the unwelcome tidings of his death. The following is his answer, "So Mr. Jerningham has bid us farewell! I was always confident that he had virtue enough, but I was not without an apprehension that he might want nerve, to meet the awful moment, as I find he did. I am infinitely gratified to hear that he died calm, resigned, and happy. But, as old Jeremy Taylor has said, and no man ever did or will say what is more applicable to human wants and weakness, or whose sentiments are more encouraging or consolatory to our nature, 'When God is pleased to send trials, he never fails to send strength.'"

In addition to the testimonies of Mr. Jerningham's poetical genius which I have given, I may properly show in what estimation he was held by the late Lord Byron, who, in a note to his vigorous satire, entitled "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," has the following passage: "I hear that Mr. Jerningham is about to take up the cudgels for his Mæccenas, Lord Carlisle; I hope not: he was one of the few who, in the very short intercourse I had with him, treated me with kindness when a boy, and whatever he may say or do, 'pour on, I will endure.'" No person was more able to appreciate a character than Lord Byron, or less disposed to spare those whom he might think deserving of censure; therefore the submissive respect with which he treats Mr. Jerningham, will justify the conclusion that he thought highly of his moral qualities, as well as of his poetical powers, as he must have been well aware of his rank among the English bards.

A more affectionate relative than Mr. Jerningham could hardly exist. He lived many years with his mother till she died at a very advanced age; and by his tenderness and filial affection, illustrated all that his poetical predecessor, Pope, has so beautifully said of his own attention to his venerable parent, under the same circumstances.

In a letter which I received from Mr. Jerningham, at Cossey, dated 1809, he says, "Since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have dragged

through a long and melancholy scene. I found my brother (the late Sir William Jerningham) at my arrival at Cossey, in a state that excluded the least indulgence of hope. A gradual and visible decay, at the expiration of five weeks, terminated in his death. If it be a salutary thing to go into the house of mourning, I ought to be the better for what I have beheld. On Tuesday last, my brother was deposited in the vault of the new Gothic Chapel (the first inhabitant of that dreary mansion), to take his long repose. I will venture to say that, at his resurrection, he will not find himself outdone in acts of benevolence by any who may be summoned to the same awful tribunal."

In another letter, received from the same place, dated 1811, he says, "My nephew (the present Lord Stafford) and his wife, who is very accomplished, live in a higher rank of splendour than my late brother, and equal him, if possible, in all the milder attractions that beam from benevolence and generosity." In the same letter he gives an interesting account of the manner in which he passed his time. Having the indulgence of breakfasting by himself at his own time, he enjoyed a long studious morning. He says, "If you ask me what I have been reading, I answer that I have seen nothing new, but the excellent library here is more than sufficient for the most omnivorous appetite. I have had some intercourse with Gibbon. I have read all his notes to his history, which show his extensive reading and his investigating spirit. I have amused myself with a second perusal of Godwin's Chaucer, which contains frequently deep reflections. Chaucer is only the text, while the interesting facts of the age are made to rally round the poet. St. Bernard's moral discourses have been part of my reading. He has warmth and energy, but his Latin is inferior to that of Lactantius, of whom I read half a volume last year. St. Bernard appears to me to have thought in old French, while he wrote in Latin; but you will think me an old pedantic monk if I should proceed, and so I will leave off and begin my walk."

I cite these passages out of many others of the same description, merely for the purpose of showing that Mr. Jerningham was a scholar and a critic, as well as a poet. He was a warm and steady friend, and to his servants a kind and indulgent master. Some years after his death, I heard them speak of him with great respect, gratitude, and affection.

I have dwelt the longer on the memory of Mr. Jerningham, because, as I have before said, I consider him one of the most amiable characters I ever knew. He was my warm and sincere friend; to him I was indebted for many happy hours, and for much interesting and valuable information. No person ever enjoyed a more familiar intercourse with the learned world, as well as with the ranks of fashion; and, with a slight alteration, what Pope says of himself in his imitation of Horace, Book ii. Sat. 1, is strictly applicable to Mr. Jerningham.

Envy must own I live among the great,  
No tool of party and no spy of state,



With eyes that pry not, tongue that ne'er repeats,  
Fond to spread friendships, but to cover heats,

To help who want, to forward who excel:  
This all who know me know, who love me tell;  
And who unknown defame me, let them be  
Scribblers or peers, alike are *mob* to me.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

CHARLES TOWNLEY, ESQ. This gentleman was deservedly distinguished by a wide circle of learned and elegant connexions, and was esteemed one of the best-bred men in the kingdom. He possessed a considerable fortune, which he employed in hospitality and in patronizing the fine arts. His collection of the works of ancient sculpture equalled any of the most celebrated in this country, and his doors were liberally opened to all men of taste. I was introduced to him by the Rev. Mr. Penneck, of the British Museum, and was afterward invited to see what were generally denominated the Townley Marbles; and a finer collection was, perhaps, never before in the hands of a private person. His bust of Clytie, one of the most admired remains of Grecian sculpture, enabled him to gratify many of his friends, by having plaster casts made from it. It is now in all the sculpture shops. Its beautiful, delicate, and pensive expression, fully illustrates the fable on which it is founded.

Mr. Townley was the nephew of the unfortunate gentleman who was beheaded for high treason, and whose head I remember to have seen placed upon a pole on the top of Temple Bar. As this exhibition was painful in no slight degree to Mr. Townley, some of his friends, among whom was Mr. Penneck, formed a plan for removing it; and one night, which happened to be a very windy one, they effected their purpose without interruption. No inquiry was made, as it was inferred that the head had been blown off by the storm. Mr. Townley had, therefore, the melancholy pleasure of having deposited the head in the tomb of his ancestors. Though a Roman Catholic, Mr. Townley possessed a truly liberal mind, of which the following fact is a sufficient proof. He had a good benefice in his gift. A Roman Catholic clergyman of great learning, and of the most amiable character, wholly without a provision, was offered the living, under the unavoidable condition of his conforming to the established religion of the country. The clergyman, though without the means of support, felt conscientious scruples, which he avowed, and seemed disposed to decline the generous offer. To settle the matter Mr. Penneck invited Mr. Townley to dinner. The Rev. Mr. Warner, chaplain to Lord Gower when our ambassador to France, just before the breaking out of the revolution, and the Roman Catholic priest, were of the party. After dinner the subject was brought forward

by Mr. Townley, who observed, that being a layman, though brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, he could not be supposed to be sufficiently conversant with the grounds of difference between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants to be able to remove the scruples of the priest; but as the good of mankind was the object of both, and as the reverend gentleman was not likely to engage in religious controversy, but to inculcate the true principles of Christianity, it seemed to him that he was better qualified to do justice to the situation than any Protestant divine whom he knew. Mr. Penneck followed, and avowed the same opinions, and requested the priest to accept the living, to which he did not doubt that he would do credit. At length it was Mr. Warner's turn to express his sentiments; and being a convivial character, and quite a latitudinarian in matters of religion, he proposed that the priest should leave the subject to the discussion of his friends, while he took a walk round the museum gardens. The priest agreed, and said, "Well, gentlemen, I am duly sensible of your kindness, and deeply grateful to Mr. Townley for his generous offer; I leave my honour in your hands, and doubt not that your decision will be just." He then retired to the gardens, the gentlemen returned to the bottle, and not a word passed on the subject during the priest's absence. On his return they told him that they had weighed his scruples, and having fully canvassed the question, were all agreed that he might conscientiously accept the living. He did so, became a favourite preacher with his congregation, and performed his duties with exemplary zeal and piety.

When the late Sir Henry Bate Dudley was appointed an Irish dean, a young lady who resided on the spot thus expressed her wish. "Oh! how I long to see our *dane*. I am told that he is a very handsome man, and that he fights like an angel." Sir Henry was certainly a handsome, well-formed man, and by his strength and activity was properly qualified for pugilistic contests, in which he was always victorious.

The lady who rode a thousand miles in a thousand hours on one horse, which forms the subject of an admirable ironical paper in Dr. Johnson's "Idler," No. 6, was a Miss Pond. She was the daughter of Mr. John Pond, a celebrated dealer in horses, and author of a work relating to the turf, very popular at the time. I knew Miss Pond very well. I used to meet her at Mrs. Jackson's, in Lyon's Inn. Mrs. Jackson was the first wife of my early friend the Rev. William Jackson, who was tried for high treason in Dublin, and would have suffered capitally if he had not died suddenly in the court, as it was supposed from the effects of poison. Miss Pond was advanced in life when I knew her. She was tall, and with a good form, by no means handsome, but well bred and accomplished. She played very well on the piano-forte. There was a gravity, and even melancholy in her manner, which I was told was the effect of disappointment in love. It appeared that she was attached to Mr. O'Bryen the actor, who is mentioned with praise, even by that stern critic Churchill, in his "Rosciad." Mr. O'Bryen clandestinely married Lady Susan



Strangeways, the daughter of Lord Ilchester, and it is said that immediately after the nuptial ceremony was performed at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and as the new-married pair were quitting the church-door at one end, the father and his party entered at the other to prevent the union. It was an unfortunate marriage for O'Bryen, except that he had an affectionate wife; for the pride of the family obliged him to quit the stage, and an appointment was procured for him in one of our West India Colonies, where he remained for many years, deprived of a profession in which he delighted and in which he was admired, and remote from his friends, who were some of the first people in this country. He was, I have heard, a fencing-master in Dublin, or the son of a fencing-master, but with manners so easy and so sprightly that he was admitted into the best company, and was a member of several of the most fashionable clubs at the west end of the town.

A brother of mine, who died at Calcutta many years ago, and was well able to estimate characters, and who knew Mr. O'Bryen, assured me that he had never seen any person equal to that gentleman for unaffected ease, spirit, and elegance of manners. Mr. O'Bryen possessed literary talents. He wrote a comedy, entitled "The Duel," partly, I believe, taken from the French; and a farce, popular at the time, entitled "Cross Purposes."

As Miss Pond is the heroine of one of the papers written by Dr. Johnson, she may well be considered worthy of remembrance, and of having her name recorded here, as it is not mentioned in any notes to "The Idler" that I have seen, or probably in any that were ever written.

MR. BATTISHILL. This was an admired musician and composer in his day, but a man very careless and dissipated in his conduct. He first became known by his music to a ballad entitled "Kate of Aberdeen," written by Mr. Cunningham, a poet and an actor well known in the provincial theatres of the north, a worthy man, and one of the early friends of the late Mr. Shield. I once had the pleasure of introducing Mr. Battishill and Mr. Shield to each other. They had before only known each other by reputation. Battishill was married to a very pretty woman, who ran off with Webster, the celebrated singer. Battishill married again, and to a plain, decent woman, who was not likely to follow the example of her profligate predecessor. Poor Battishill was always embarrassed, and had shifted his quarters all round the suburbs of the metropolis so often, that he died in obscurity, and no notice seems to have been taken of the time or place, though he was a man of unquestionable merit in his profession.

To show the careless and convivial disposition of Battishill, as I was passing over Blackfriars Bridge one evening, I saw him walking before me, and hastening my pace, I tapped him on the back. Without turning his head to see who had touched him, he said, "Ah! will you go with me to Jemmy Rowley's?"—concluding, of course, that I was one of his boon companions. Considering his general

state of embarrassment, it is somewhat singular that he was not rather alarmed at a tap on the shoulder.

DR. SHEBBEARE. I was slightly acquainted with this gentleman, and introduced Dr. Wolcot to him one evening as we returned to town after having dined with Dr. Monsey at Chelsea Hospital. We dined at the governor's table, as it was then styled, but which has long been abolished. We let Dr. Shebbeare have all the talk to himself, as he had once been a distinguished character, and we wished to know, so far as we had opportunity of judging, what were his pretensions to the fame he had acquired. He was loud, positive, loquacious, and dictatorial. To keep him in good-humour, I spoke in praise of his novel, entitled "Lydia, or Filial Piety," which I had read in my early days, and which I recollected with pleasure; and this notice of his work induced him to say that he had lately called on a friend, who not being at home, he took up a book which he found upon the table, and opened it in the middle. After reading some pages, he said he found the "author's train of thought" (such was his expression) so congenial to his own, that he turned to the title-page, and found it was actually his own work, of which I had been speaking. This statement was evidently a falsehood, for the work deals little in reflection, and it was impossible for him to have read a single page without meeting the names of some of the characters of which the work consisted.

I never read his "Letters to the English Nation," which contained the libel for which he was sentenced to the pillory. From respect to his function as a clergyman, he was, as I have heard, permitted to stand upon the board, instead of putting his head through the hole. During the hour while he stood, there was a very hard rain, and an Irish chairman held an umbrella over him all the time. When the punishment ended, he gave the man half-a-crown. "What, no more, please your honour?" said the man. "Why you stood but an hour," said the doctor, "and surely that is enough." "Ay, but consider the disgrace, please your honour," rejoined the man, and the doctor, far from being offended, gave him a guinea for his humour. This trait of the doctor's temper is the most favourable anecdote I ever heard of him. His son was a clergyman of the Church of England, a very respectable character, and a great admirer of music.

MR. TETHERINGTON. This person I have met in private and in tavern parties. He was an Irishman, and chiefly known at gaming-tables, and places of a similar description. I have heard that when he first came from Dublin, he affected great simplicity, and the persons in general with whom he associated, expected to find him so easy a dupe, that he went by the name of "The Child;" but it soon appeared, to use their language, that he was "a deep one," and more than a match for all of them, as they found to their cost. He, however, retained the name of "The Child." He had more of that mode of speaking which is styled *slang* than any man I ever met with, not excepting Hewerdine, whom I have mentioned in another place. As I was once returning late with Dr. Wolcot from a company with



whom we had passed the night, we met Tetherington, who was so tipsy that he hardly knew me, but notwithstanding his convivial state, all he said was, "Will you go and have a booze?" We, however, declined the overture, and wished him good-night. He had an agreeable person; and an actress of merit on the London stage was so attached to him, that she relinquished a good situation to live with him, and thereby lost her reputation, and finally sank into dejection and ruin.

The late Mr. Lewis, the great comic actor and the unaffected gentleman, told me the following anecdote of Mr. Tetherington. An elephant was brought to Dublin, and as it was the only one that had ever been seen in Ireland, the proprietor charged a crown for the sight. Tetherington, who wanted to see, but was not inclined to pay, hastily entered the place, exclaiming in a hurry, "Where's your elephant? What! is that him? Turn him about: Lord, how he stinks!—I can't stay any longer;" and, holding his nose while he uttered this complaint, he as hastily left the place as he had entered, and the keeper was afraid to stop him and demand payment, lest he should bring a disgrace upon the animal, and lessen its attraction. If this story had reached London before Tetherington, he might have been deemed, in the words of Pope upon Gay, "in wit a man," rather than "in simplicity a child."

COAN, the dwarf. This man is mentioned by Churchill in his "Rosciad;" speaking of Barry, who was very tall, he says,

While to six feet the vig'rous stripling grown,  
Declares that Garrick is another Coan.

Coan lived at the house of one of the Pinchbecks: of these there were three brothers, all of whom were acquainted with my father. They had invented the metal which went by their name, and to attract public attention they pretended to quarrel, and advertised against each other, all claiming the invention, and proclaiming the superiority of the article in which each of them dealt. They were, however, upon the most amiable footing in reality, and used to meet every night and divide the profits of the day. The metal had lost its popularity when I used to accompany my father to visit his patients, and he generally called on them as he passed their way.

In my time one of the Pinchbecks kept the toy and rarity shop in Cockspur-street, and was patronised by King George the Third, who was fond of ingenious curiosities; another was a pawnbroker, in West Smithfield; and the third was landlord of a coffee-house and tavern in Five Fields, Chelsea. With him resided Coan the dwarf, whose portrait was the sign of the tavern.

I remember being with my father at this tavern, of which Coan was the principal attraction. I was about twelve years old, and Coan was shorter in stature than myself. He walked to and fro in the room conversing with great ease and spirit with my father, upon public affairs, I presume. The notice which Coan excited, and the

familiar vivacity of his manner, I well remember mortified me, as I was left by myself in one of the boxes without notice, though I thought that, as I was taller than he, I was entitled to as much attention, overlooking entirely the difference of our ages. As well as I can possibly recollect the events of so distant a period, Coan, at the time when I saw him, was about forty years of age, and an intelligent, observing, and reflecting person. My father, who was a man of sense, wit, and discernment, represented him to me in that light. I shall conclude this chapter with a few anecdotes.

The late king, when Prince of Wales, gave a magnificent fête at Carlton House, and for a few days after persons having previously obtained tickets were permitted to see the tables and the adjoining rooms of that palace. Lady W—— complained bitterly to Colonel Bloomfield that her husband was not invited. The colonel attempted to sooth the lady, observing, his royal highness had so many persons to invite, that, to avoid giving offence to any, it had been deemed expedient to follow the alphabet for the order of names, but the company was found to be complete before the list reached down to W. "Pooh, pooh!" said the lady, "don't tell me, for I dare say there were many W's there."

Mr. Pitt went one evening into the late Duchess of Gordon's box at the Opera-house. Not having seen him for some time, she addressed him with her usual blunt familiarity. "Well, Mr. Pitt, do you talk as much nonsense as you did when I last saw you?"—"I know not that," said Mr. Pitt, "but I have certainly not heard so much nonsense since I had last the pleasure of seeing your grace."

During war-time, a member of parliament arose in the House of Commons, and proposed that the militia should not be ordered out of the kingdom. Mr. Pitt immediately arose, and with sarcastic smile, said, "Except in case of invasion."

Dignum was once performing one of the dumb nobles in the play of King Henry the Eighth, and hearing in praise of Cardinal Wolsey's learning, "Witness those *twins*, Ipswich and Oxford," colleges which the cardinal had founded; Dignum whispered his brother noble on the stage, observing that he never knew the cardinal had been married, and asking if the twins were his natural children.

DR. JOHNSON. I hold in reverence the character of this great man, but as he was avowedly attached to the Stuart family, there can be no harm in illustrating his sentiments by a fact. Dr. Monsey assured me that he had once been in company where the conversation turned upon the age of our late excellent monarch George the Third. Johnson was present, and suddenly exclaimed, "Pooh, what does it signify when such an animal was born, or whether he had ever been born at all?"—"Yet," added Monsey, "I have lived to see that man accept a pension from the king whom he thus affected to despise."

BUCKHORSE. This man was one of the lower order of boxers; he used to frequent the schools of Westminster and Eton, and would let the scholars hit him as hard as they could, even on the face, for a



shilling. He used to sell little switches for boys, which he styled jemmies. I remember to have seen him towards the end of his life, when he was a poor decrepit creature. He had only one eye, but I suppose he had lost the other in early life, for there is a print from a picture by a painter of that time, named Collins, representing two females fighting, and Buckhorse appears to be taking part in the contest, and seems to have been a stout man. Buckhorse was once so notorious that two volumes were published entitled "Memoirs of the noted Buckhorse," but I suppose they were merely the vehicle of humour or of political satire. I never read them, and when I wanted to obtain them, they seemed to have been expunged from the circulating libraries.

EMERY, the actor, whom I well knew, was a man of talents and of worth, but too much devoted to convivial enjoyments. He was excellent in rustic characters, and indeed so plain, simple, and correct in performing them, that he did not seem to be acting. He was a good musician, and also an artist. Finding that I had supported him in the public press before I knew him, when I became acquainted with him he presented me with a landscape drawn by himself in water-colours, and framed and glazed, which he would not suffer me to refuse.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

THOMSON, the poet. The merit of this poet is universally acknowledged, and therefore all eulogiums on his works are unnecessary; but the character of these and the conduct of his life were essentially different. Nobody could describe the excellences of the female character with more delicacy than he has done; but as a man of gallantry, if such a denomination may be applied to him, his taste was of the most vulgar description. My friend Mr. Donaldson, whom I have previously mentioned, resided at Richmond when Thomson lived at the same place, and was very intimate with him, as may easily be supposed, for Mr. Donaldson was a scholar, a poet, and a wit. Thomson, speaking of Musidora, says, that she possessed

A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,  
A delicate refinement known to few.

Yet Mr. Donaldson assured me, that when once in company with Thomson, and several gentlemen were speaking of the fair sex in a sensual manner, Thomson expressed his admiration of them in more beastly terms than any of the company, and such as, though I well remember, I do not think proper to preserve.

The most extraordinary fact in the history of this excellent poet I

derived from my late friend Mr. George Chalmers, whose industry, research, and learning are well known. It was Mr. Chalmers's intention to write the life of Thomson, but whether to introduce into his elaborate work, "Caledonia," or not, I do not recollect; he told me, however, the following remarkable fact, on which he assured me I might confidently depend. Mr. Chalmers had heard that an old housekeeper of Thomson's was alive and still resided at Richmond. Having determined to write a life of the celebrated poet of his country, he went to Richmond, thinking it possible he might obtain some account of the domestic habits of the poet, and other anecdotes which might impart interest and novelty to his narration. He found that the old housekeeper had a good memory, and was of a communicative turn. She informed him Thomson had been actually married in early life, but that his wife had been taken by him merely for her person, and was so little calculated to be introduced to his great friends, or indeed his friends in general, that he had kept her in a state of obscurity for many years, and when he at last, from some compunctious feelings, required her to come and live with him at Richmond, he still kept her in the same secluded state, so that she appeared to be only one of the old domestics of the family. At length his wife, experiencing little of the attention of a husband, though otherwise provided with every thing that could make her easy, if not comfortable, asked his permission to go for a few weeks to visit her own relations in the north. Thomson gave his consent, exacting a promise that she would not reveal her real situation to any of his or her own family. She agreed, but when she had advanced no farther on her journey than to London, she was there taken ill, and in a short time died. The news of her death was immediately conveyed to Thomson, who ordered a decent funeral, and she was buried, as the old housekeeper said, in the church-yard of old Marylebone church.

Mr. Chalmers, who was indefatigable in his inquiries, was not satisfied with the old woman's information, but immediately went and examined the church register, where he found the following entry—"Died, Mary Thomson, a stranger"—in confirmation of the housekeeper's testimony. My late worthy friend Mr. Malone, I doubt not, would not have been satisfied with this simple register, but would have pursued the inquiry till he had discovered all the family of Mary Thomson, the time of the marriage, and every thing that could throw a light on this mysterious event, important and interesting only as it relates to a poet who will always be conspicuous in the annals of British literature. Thus we find that the letter from Thomson to his sister, accounting for his not having married, which is inserted in all the biographical reports of Thomson, is fallacious, and that his concealment of his early marriage was the result of pride and shame, when he became acquainted with Lady Hertford, Lord Lyttelton, and all the high connexions of his latter days.

Mr. Boswell, in his ever-amusing, and I may add instructive life of



Dr. Johnson, says, "My own notion is, that Thomson was a much coarser man than his friends are willing to allow. His 'Seasons' are indeed full of elegant and pious sentiments, animated by a poetic and philosophic spirit; yet a rank soil, nay, a dunghill, will produce beautiful flowers." Boswell never knew Thomson, but the report of the poet's surviving friends, who would not suppress the truth, fully confirms the account of Mr. Donaldson, who was personally intimate with the bard.

Mr. Chalmers, finding that the old housekeeper retained some of the furniture which had belonged to Thomson, purchased his breakfast-table, some old-fashioned salt-cellar and wine-glasses. I had the pleasure of drinking tea with Mr. Chalmers on that table. I mentioned this circumstance to Dr. Wolcot, who told me that if I had any poetry in my nature I should write an ode on the subject; and in conformity with this hint, I wrote the stanzas which will be found in one of my printed volumes.

MR. GEORGE CHALMERS. With this gentleman I had the pleasure of being acquainted many years. He was a native of Scotland, and his accent strongly indicated his country. He was one of the most indefatigable writers ever engaged in literature. He had been concerned in business in America, and had seen much of the world. Though no man was better qualified to examine evidence, and though so laborious in investigation, and anxious for truth, yet he seemed on particular occasions to have been somewhat too credulous. For instance, he conceived that a young Irishman, named Hugh Boyd, was the author of the celebrated Letters of Junius, though many reasons may be given which might be deemed conclusive against his opinion and apparently confident belief. The internal evidence of the letters may be deemed a satisfactory proof that they could not have been written by a young man; and the edition of Junius published by Mr. George Woodfall, the son of the original publisher, shows that Junius wrote to "The Public Advertiser" under a different signature, before he adopted and adhered to that of Junius, and consequently as Hugh Boyd was then younger, he may reasonably be supposed to have been less qualified by his time of life for the composition of letters that are characterized by deep knowledge of mankind, learning, and extensive acquaintance with political subjects.

I have the pleasure of being acquainted with a daughter of Hugh Boyd, and from all she has informed me of the disposition of her father, it is difficult to suppose that a man of his mild, pacific, and benevolent character, could have written with so much vehemence, acrimony, and venom, as appear in those letters. Her brother, who is a profound scholar and a very elegant poet, as far as I could learn from Miss Boyd, did not appear to think his father was the author of "Junius." It is by no means improbable, that had Mr. Chalmers seen this last edition of "Junius," with all the private letters to the elder Mr. Woodfall, from Junius, under various signatures, he would have relinquished his conviction that Hugh Boyd was the author, and with equal zeal have given another direction to his researches; as he

would have been convinced that Hugh Boyd had neither experience nor opportunity to derive information sufficient for the composition of these letters.

Mr. Chalmers was at first a believer in Ireland's fabrications of the pretended "Shakspeare Papers," but was ensnared with many other learned and able men. However, on farther inquiry and reflection he recanted, and appeared to greater advantage than those who originally doubted: for some of the most hostile opponents would not even inspect the specious documents, displaying prejudice rather than caution; Mr. Chalmers, on the contrary, fairly stated his grounds for belief, and supported them by such arguments as justified those who had at first confided in the validity of the imposition.

Although so zealous and persevering an inquirer, Mr. Chalmers was, however, inclined to retain his opinion respecting Hugh Boyd; for he assured me, a gentleman who had met Boyd in the East Indies positively told him that Boyd had acknowledged to him that he was really the author of "Junius," though he had reasons for not divulging the secret while he was in England. It is hardly possible to conceive that so shrewd and intelligent a man as Mr. Chalmers should have placed any confidence in such a testimony. How many persons are there in the world who would *confess* themselves to be Junius, if they thought any reliance would be placed on their declaration! The Rev. Mr. Rozenhagen was one of the *rumoured* candidates for that honour; and so wide and confident was the report, that my ingenious friend Mr. James Sayers, the author of "Elijah's Mantle," so erroneously attributed to Mr. Canning, published an etching of Mr. Rozenhagen, with a paper half out of his pocket, on which was inscribed the word Junius.

The story relating to Mr. Gerard Hamilton, generally styled single-speech Hamilton, and the Duke of Richmond, though well known may be repeated in this place. It seems that Mr. Hamilton had called on Mr. Sampson Woodfall, who in the confidence of friendship had shown him a letter from Junius, which Mr. Woodfall said was to appear in "The Public Advertiser" next day. Mr. Hamilton called on the Duke of Richmond the following morning, and relying on what Mr. Woodfall had said, informed his grace that there was a letter from Junius in "The Public Advertiser" of *that day*, repeating as much as he recollected of its contents. As soon as Mr. Hamilton left his grace, the duke sent immediately for "The Public Advertiser," but by some accident the letter was not published, and instead of it there was an apology from the printer for being obliged to postpone it to the following day. This circumstance naturally induced the duke to suspect Hamilton to be Junius, and hence the report gained ground that he was really the author. Hamilton, however, resolutely denied that he had any concern in the letters; and in order to avert what he affected to consider a degrading imputation, he even spoke of them as literary compositions of little value.

Another circumstance which tended to diffuse the suspicion that



Hamilton was the author occurred at Brooks's club. The subject of conversation turned on Junius's letters, in one of the rooms at that celebrated resort of the opposition wits, and Charles Fox, whose voice was shrill and piercing, spoke very lightly of them. The adjoining room was open, and whoever was there might easily hear all that passed in the other. It happened that Hamilton was the only person in the adjoining room during this conversation, and it was therefore probable he had heard what passed. Hamilton and Fox had previously been upon very friendly terms, but it was observed that from that day he behaved towards Fox with great coolness, and sometimes seemed purposely to avoid him. This fact, coupled with what happened at the Duke of Richmond's, induced many of the members of Brooks's club to believe that Hamilton was really Junius. I learned this story from my friend Joe Richardson, who was a member of the club. Perhaps among all the persons to whom the reputation of Junius has been attributed, no coincidence of events has brought the suspicion so near to any individual as to Hamilton.

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

**MR. ARTHUR MURPHY.** It was no slight advantage to me to have known this gentleman intimately for many years, as I derived much knowledge of the world from his sagacity and experience. No person was better acquainted with mankind. I observed him attentively and studied his character. In the earlier part of his life, I understood he had the reputation of being remarkably well-bred, insomuch that he was said to have realized Dr. Johnson's notion of a fine gentleman. However, when I first became acquainted with him, he had contracted something of Johnson's positive, though not his dictatorial manner.

The chief reason why the doctor thought Mr. Murphy so well-bred was, that he never ventured to oppose his opinions directly, but covertly expressed his own. If Johnson dogmatically urged an argument to which Murphy did not agree, the latter used to say, "But, doctor, may it not be said in answer"—and then stated his own opinion. "Yes, sir," replied Johnson, sometimes, "it may, by a fool;" and sometimes with more courtesy, "Yes, sir, but with more plausibility than truth." On other occasions, when Johnson was vehement in delivering his sentiments, Mr. Murphy used to say, "I think, doctor, a French author, much esteemed, was not of your opinion. He says, as well as I remember"—and then Mr. Murphy again covertly delivered his own opinions. The doctor's answer was generally, "Well, sir, the French literati are a learned and intelligent body, and their opinions should not be hastily rejected." By these means Mr.

Murphy declared that the doctor was prevented from ever having answered him with direct rudeness on any occasion, though Mr. Murphy never servilely submitted to his dictates.

Mr. Murphy told me that his respect for Johnson induced him to have recourse to these expedients, and that even when he perfectly agreed with him, he used to adopt the same plan, in order to see how far the doctor was able to press and illustrate his arguments. Boswell, with all his subserviency to Johnson, sometimes opposed him so bluntly, and consequently suffered under the doctor's formidable rebukes to such a degree, that Mr. Murphy said he had seen him leave the room in tears. Mr. Cooke, the old barrister, described the tremendous force of Johnson's reproofs in the same manner, and used to add that there was no living with him without implicit submission. Fortunately for Johnson, Murphy was intimately connected with the Thrale family, to whom he introduced the doctor, who, in consequence, passed many of his years under their kind protection.

Mr. Murphy could not bear to recollect that he had ever been on the stage, and I remember to have been present when he was reading a sketch of his life, in a periodical work entitled "*The Monthly Mirror*;" coming to the passage which alluded to his acting, he passed it over with a peevish interjection, and proceeded to the rest of the article. He was most brutally treated by Churchill, who, indeed, paid no respect to persons if they happened to differ from him in politics. Murphy, however, at length answered him and other enemies in a vigorous poem, which excited the approbation of Dr. Johnson.

Mr. Murphy was too apt to quarrel with theatrical managers and booksellers, and this he did with Garrick, whom he idolized as an actor, but certainly never liked as a man. It is strange that when he mentioned Garrick, it was always in the following manner: "Off the stage he was a little sneaking rascal, but on the stage, oh, my great God!" I have heard him utter these words several times during the same evening without any variation.

The original ground of difference arose from Garrick's having promised to bring forward Murphy's first play, "*The Orphan of China*," and then rejected it. Owing, however, to the friendly interposition of Lord Holland, the father of Charles Fox, the play was represented, and with great success, Garrick performing the chief character. Mr. Murphy, in his "*Life of Garrick*," relates a kind artifice which Lord Holland adopted to obtain Garrick's consent. In that "*Life*" he speaks with great respect of Garrick's private character, though he mentioned him so harshly in conversation.

Another ground of difference between them arose from the success of the admirable farce of "*High Life Below Stairs*." Murphy had presented a farce to Garrick on the same subject, and said he was convinced that Garrick borrowed the plot from his farce, but, fearful of his resentment, induced Mr. Townley, one of the Masters of Merchant Tailors' School, to appear as the author. If that, however, was really the fact, why did not Murphy publish his own farce,



as he never was accustomed to suppress his resentments, except, perhaps, that Garrick had improved so much on the original conception, that he did not think proper to hazard the comparison?

Mr. Murphy was a liberal admirer of other writers. He told me that he was formerly a constant visiter at a bookseller's shop at the Mews-gate, kept by Mr. Paine, whose son is now in partnership with Mr. Foss, in Pall Mall. He further assured me, that his chief reason for frequenting that place, which was the principal resort of literary characters at the time, had been to listen to the conversation of Dr. Akenside, while he himself pretended to be reading a book. He said that nothing could be more delightful than the poet's conversation. I asked him if he ever became acquainted with him, and he answered in the negative. I then asked him why he had not endeavoured to make himself known to so eminent a man, as he was himself a scholar, and well known as a dramatic writer. "Oh!" said he, "I had only written farces, and the doctor would not have condescended to notice me." This modest delicacy shows that he had no overweening confidence in his own powers. He assured me that he had read "The Pleasures of Imagination" twenty-three times, and always with new pleasure.

Mr. Murphy was the translator of Marmontel's "Belisarius." He received the original, sheet by sheet, from Paris, and the translation was published in London as soon as the original appeared in that capital. During the French revolution, and the threatening progress of French principles in this country, Mr. Murphy published a translation of Sallust's "History of Catiline's Conspiracy, with the four Orations of Cicero." This work he dedicated to the Earl of Lauderdale, who was then a very conspicuous character in public. The dedication severely animadverts upon his lordship's political conduct; and there are many notes and illustrations of the same tendency. My late friend Mr. John Gifford, the magistrate, addressed letters to Lord Lauderdale about the same period, and they form a masterly examination of his lordship's political character and conduct.

Murphy published his translation of Sallust under the name of George Frederick Sydney, and dated it from Bristol, conceiving that such an appellation had a true British sound; but a whimsical circumstance occurred, for a person of that name called upon the publisher, and remonstrated with him on the liberty he had taken in affixing his name to the work.

Mr. Murphy's translation of "Tacitus" is well known, and, I believe, generally approved. He used to style it "a jail-delivery of Tacitus from Gordon." He might probably have received a liberal recompense if he had dedicated this work to the Marquis of Lansdown, who was conspicuous in the political world at the time, having received a hint to that effect from his lordship; but he determined, though then in a situation which would have rendered a pecuniary supply peculiarly acceptable, to dedicate it to his old friend Edmund Burke. He presented me with a copy of that work, and also with his "Life of Johnson," as well as his translation of Sallust. The

latter work was published in the year 1795. The following passage in his dedication to Lord Lauderdale is worth extraction. "The French, my lord, are under great obligations to the present opposition: it is not known that they are willing to treat, and yet motion after motion is made to force his majesty's ministers to sue for peace to a people who are still in a state of anarchy. It is a maxim of Livy, the great Roman historian, that war is preferable to a bad peace: *Miseram pacem vel bello bene mutari*: but the present war, your lordship says, is likely to be attended with some dreadful disaster. For this reason, two notable opinions are assigned: first, because the French have superior skill in ship-building: secondly, because we have seen that the want of saltpetre can be supplied by exertion. Without entering into a discussion of these points, it will be sufficient to say, that some of the best ships in the British navy were built in France; and as to the second assertion, Lord Howe, Admiral Hotham, Sir John Borlase Warren, Sir Edward Pellew, and other gallant officers, have proved, if the French have saltpetre, that they do not know how to use it."

After Mr. Murphy had quitted the bar, and resigned his first commissionship of bankrupts, he lived in retirement and neglect. He was always improvident in money matters, and at one time his chief means of support were founded on the expectation of selling the copyright of a complete collection of his works, and his translation of Tacitus. In this situation he found it necessary to dispose of a part of his valuable library; and here I must relate an incident of an affecting kind, at which I was present. He called upon the late Mr. Coutts, the eminent banker, in the Strand, and tendered a part of his library to that gentleman for three hundred pounds. Mr. Coutts told him that he had no time for books, and did not want to buy more than he had; but said, "It shall make no difference to you, Mr. Murphy, as you shall find when you take this down to the office," presenting him with a draft for that sum. Mr. Murphy was so overcome by his feelings, that, after taking a grateful leave of Mr. Coutts, he hurried to the Sun office, in the Strand, and entered the room where Mr. Heriot, then principal proprietor of the Sun newspaper, Mr. Freeling, now Sir Francis, and myself were present. He entered the room hastily, with the draft in his hand, and his eyes full of tears, and related this generous act of Mr. Coutts. Mr. Freeling was then a stranger to Mr. Murphy, whose gratitude was so strong that he was unable to suppress or control it. Mr. Murphy afterward, as some return to Mr. Coutts for this act of kindness, dedicated his *Life of Garrick* to him, with suitable expressions of esteem, respect, and gratitude.

Mr. Jessé Foot, in his "*Life of Murphy*," says, "For the last seven years he was far removed from want. A legacy of one thousand pounds, from his relation Mrs. Ford, came very acceptably. His appointment as commissioner of bankrupts, and his sale of '*The Life of Garrick*' followed. His generous allowance from Mrs. Plunkett followed that, and lastly came his pension from the crown." When



Mr. Murphy was placed in this comfortable situation, I had the pleasure of dining with him, in company with Mr. Foot and a few friends, at the Prince of Wales's Tavern, in the vicinity of Sloane-street. Before dinner he read to us the conclusion of "The Life of Garrick," in which, in a masterly manner, he has reviewed his character as a manager, an actor, an author, and a private gentleman, paying in all the highest tribute to his memory.

I cite the following passage from Mr. Foot's life referring to this occasion:—"I never shall forget that when the chief of the company had departed, he, Mr. Taylor, and myself took a turn into Sloane-street, just as the full moon appeared above the horizon, and without preparing us at all for it, he threw himself into a fine dramatic attitude, and recited in the most impressive manner Pope's description of the moon of Homer."

I remember being as much struck as Mr. Foot was at the grand and graceful manner in which Mr. Murphy recited this beautiful passage; and if I were to judge from it of his powers as an actor, I should conclude that Churchill's description of his theatrical talents was the mere effusion of political malignity. He was an admirable reader, as I had a good opportunity of knowing, for he invited me to dine with him *tête-à-tête* at Hammersmith, and read to me one of his manuscript tragedies; and without the least pomp or affectation, he appeared to me to be able to do justice to any author in theatrical performance. His voice was firm and well-toned, and capable of adapting itself to every change of passion, particularly as his figure in the meridian of life must have been lofty and commanding. It is evident that he thought he possessed talents for the stage, as he adopted the theatrical profession at the time when Garrick was in the meridian of his powers, and the object of Murphy's highest admiration. Wedderburne must have been intimate with him during the time that he was on the stage, as may be inferred from Churchill's having described the former as

The pert, prim prater of the northern race,  
Guilt in his heart, and famine in his face.

He was mentioned in "The Rosciad" as the advocate for Mr. Murphy in his pretensions to the theatrical chair. Wedderburne, when he became Lord Loughborough and lord-chancellor, appointed Murphy commissioner of bankrupts, which office after some years he resigned, but not being prosperous in other pursuits, he applied for it again and was reinstated.

It is to be regretted that his lordship did not appoint him a master in chancery, as the noble lord knew how careless he was in money matters, for he was well qualified for the situation, and then he would have had a comfortable provision for life. His third appointment as commissioner of bankrupts, after he had twice resigned the situation, was given to him by Lord Eldon; and when he tendered his third resignation to that nobleman, his lordship advised him in a kind letter to retain it, observing that no doubt some of his brother commis-

sioners would relieve him in its duties, and adding that he should take no notice of his resignation unless he repeated it. Mr. Murphy did so, and then devoted himself wholly to literary pursuits.\*

During this period of retirement he used when in town to sleep at Old Slaughter's Coffee-house, where Holman, Morton, Reynolds, Fawcett, and myself, often assembled at night. One evening, when we were full of mirth and nonsense, Mr. Murphy, who was in a box at the other end of the room, joined us, and of course, out of respect to him, the party would have restrained their wild gayety, but that the irresistible force of habit prevented. Puns and satirical attacks upon each other constituted the conversation, which Mr. Murphy bore patiently for some time. At length he said, "I don't like this push-pin work; let us have something rational." Finding us however incorrigible, he grew peevish, and when I said, "Ah, Mr. Murphy, you and I have passed some happy hours, different from these," he said vehemently, "Never, sir!" and hastily withdrew to bed. We all agreed to meet together on the following night, but, unwilling to annoy him again with our levity, we determined to assemble at New Slaughter's Coffee-house; when however we met, there we found Mr. Murphy, who had come there to avoid us. He kept at a distance till he had taken a candle and was going to bed; he however came up to our box, as if to bid us good night, and I having said, "Mr. Murphy, you are treating us *lightly*," pointing to the candle, he abruptly left us, and we heard him saying to himself all the way up the stairs, "Treating them lightly—treating them lightly!"

In contrast to this sportive folly, I may mention a coffee-house adventure relating to Mr. Murphy, which, according to report, had a melancholy termination. A Mr. Fazakerly was one evening in company with Mr. Jessé Foot, and other gentlemen, in a box at Jack's Coffee-house in Dean-street, Soho, contiguous to Mr. Foot's residence. Mr. Fazakerly introduced the subject of Mr. Murphy, and spoke contemptuously of his talents. Mr. Foot warmly advocated his friend, as a scholar and able dramatic writer. The controversy produced high words, and Mr. Foot left the box, but, as he was going, Mr. Fazakerly made use of some opprobrious epithet. Mr. Foot suddenly stopped, and asked him if he applied the word to him or to Mr. Murphy? Mr. Fazakerly answered equivocally, and Mr. Foot then retorted some opprobrious epithet on him; Mr. Fazakerly immediately left the box, and a scuffle ensued, in which Mr. Foot knocked him down, and kept him on the ground, saying, "I am a professional man, and do not choose to be disfigured; I therefore will not let you get up unless you promise not to strike me, but to end the quarrel in a more gentlemanly manner." Mr. Fazakerly made the promise, then arose and returned to his box. Mr. Foot went to his

\* I have satisfactory reasons for believing that Lord Sidmouth, to smooth the declining days of Mr. Murphy, procured a pension for him, as a steady friend and zealous supporter of our unrivalled constitution, but to what amount I have not heard. It was but a just reward for learning and talents always employed for the amusement of the public or the interest of the country.



home in the same street, and expecting a hostile message the next day, was prepared to receive it, and immediately requested a gentleman named Leigh to be his second. A full week, however, passed before Mr. Foot heard from his opponent, but then received a challenge. He consulted some friends, among others a military officer, and they all agreed that as Mr. Foot had been kept so many days in suspense, he had a right to refuse a challenge which had been so long withheld. This opinion of his friends he conveyed to his adversary, of whom he heard no more, but that he had gone into the country, and finding the story had reached the neighbourhood, and made an impression unfavourable to him, had sunk into dejection, and after a few days, during which his depression increased, had *died suddenly*. Such was the report. Mr. Foot always spoke of him with respect and regret, as a learned, intelligent, and worthy man; and appeared deeply to lament the unhappy difference that took place between them.

Mr. Murphy once proposed that we should write periodical essays together, in the manner of his own "Gray's Inn Journal," that we might, as he said, be "a kind of Beaumont and Fletcher." I assured him that I had no tendency towards essay-writing, and that however proud I should be in joining my name with his in any literary enterprise, I must decline his flattering proposal for that species of composition. He told me that I was mistaken, and that he could suggest a few expedients which would qualify me to write as well in that manner as in any other. The plan, however, was never carried into effect, and Mr. Murphy then devoted his attention to his "Life of Garrick."

Mr. Foot, with all his partiality to Mr. Murphy, speaks of that work as slight, scanty, and not upon a level with his other compositions; but the truth is, that he began too long after the death of the great English Roscius, and too late in life. The criticisms, however, which he has introduced on the several plays that were brought forward during the management of Garrick, are sound and just, as well as candid, and manifest a truly liberal exemption from all literary rivalry.

It is well known that the celebrated Miss Elliot, whom Mr. Murphy first brought forward upon the stage in the character of Maria! in his farce of "The Citizen," lived for some time under his protection, to adopt the lenient phrase usual on such occasions. He lived with her in a cottage near Richmond, and she resided there while he went upon the circuit. Returning unexpectedly on one of these occasions, he found a fine haunch of venison roasting at the fire. Upon inquiry, he found that the Earl of Bristol was a constant visitor to the lady, and expected to dine there that day. This circumstance put an end at once to the connexion, and to his rural retirement. The lady at length lived under the protection of a member of the royal family, now deceased; Mr. Murphy never withdrew his countenance from her, and she was glad to retain so valuable a friend. At her desire her royal admirer permitted Mr. Murphy to visit her when he

was at home, and was much pleased with his conversation. Mr. Murphy assured me that he was a more intelligent character than was generally supposed. Miss Elliot died in this situation, and such was her regard for Mr. Murphy, that she would have left the bulk of her property to him, but he declined it, and took care to secure it for her relations, of whom one, as far as I recollect, was her sister. By all accounts she was one of the most original and spirited actresses that ever appeared upon the stage.

The late Mr. Philip Champion Crespigny, King's Proctor, communicated to me the following incident respecting Miss Elliot. A gentleman, a friend of his, a member of parliament, but not ready in conversation, had made an appointment with a lady to sup with him at a tavern, and requested him to be of the party, as he was lively and would keep conversation afloat. Mr. Crespigny agreed, and they went together to the tavern. The waiter told him that the lady was up-stairs, and conducted them to the room, but no lady appeared, and they remained wondering what had become of her; while they were speculating on the cause of her absence, she suddenly burst laughing from a closet in which she had hid herself. Mr. Crespigny added that he knew her immediately, as he remembered her to have been servant of a lady whom he was in the habit of visiting, before her beauty had betrayed her into that unfortunate mode of life in which she became first known as Miss Elliot to Mr. Murphy, whose kindness, attention, and assiduity enabled her to maintain herself by her talents, and to become a distinguished support of the comic stage. Miss Elliot was upon the stage before my time, or rather before I began to pay much attention to theatrical amusements. From all I can learn she had as much vivacity as the late Mrs. Jordan, but with a more graceful and elegant manner. This superiority on her part is the more extraordinary, as Miss Elliot was in her early life totally destitute of education, and Mrs. Jordan, from her family connexions, had the common advantages of female cultivation and accomplishments.

I was often invited to dine with Mr. Murphy during what may be styled his retirement at Knightsbridge, and by his desire Mrs. Taylor was several times of the party. His dinners were well chosen, and without ostentation. At length his end was evidently approaching. He appointed Mr. Jessé Foot his sole executor. On his death, Mr. Foot invited me, as one of Mr. Murphy's oldest, or rather most intimate friends, to his funeral. The late Sir Henry Bate Dudley wrote to Mr. Foot, requesting that he and Mr. Denis O'Brien might be permitted to join in the last testimonies of respect to the memory of Mr. Murphy, signifying that he should not occasion any additional expense, as he should bring Mr. O'Brien in his own carriage. Mr. Foot of course consented, and they attended the last ceremonies at Hammer-smith. Whether there was anybody besides Mr. Foot and myself in the mourning-coach, I cannot now recollect, and Mr. Foot has not mentioned in his *Life of Mr. Murphy*. Among many letters from Mr. Murphy, I shall select one, as it is gratifying to show that so eminent a man was not indifferent to my welfare.



MY DEAR TAYLOR,

I have been in daily expectation of your answer to my last letter, but disappointed as I am, I now feel myself greatly alarmed. I am afraid that illness has occasioned your silence, and shall not be easy till I have some account of you. If writing is likely to be a fatigue to you, pray desire your lady, or some friend, to favour me with a line, that I may not thus remain in suspense.

Adieu, my dear friend, and

Believe me, yours unalterably,

ARTHUR MURPHY.

No. 14 Knightsbridge,  
8th May, 1804.

Having mentioned Mrs. Jordan, I will not deny myself the pleasure of saying a few words of respect and regret. Though she did not find me among her warm admirers when she first came upon the London stage, she was not offended at my remarks on her acting, but had good sense enough to prefer sincerity to adulation. Mrs. Jordan, though so full of spirit, and apparently of self-confidence, was by no means vain of her acting. I remember sitting with her one night in the green-room at Covent Garden theatre, when she was about to perform the part of Rosalind, in "As you like it." I happened to mention an actor who had recently appeared with wonderful success, and expressed my surprise at the public taste in this instance. "Oh! Mr. Taylor, don't mention public taste," said she, "for if the public had any taste, how could they bear me in the part which I play to-night, and which is far above my habits and pretensions?" Yet this was one of the characters in which she was so popular.

Mrs. Jordan had a great deal of humour, and related anecdotes with much spirit. She took in good part, and unaffectedly, any comments on her acting. In my opinion, if she had cultivated her talents for plaintive characters, and had studied more the graces of demeanour, she would have been a very interesting representative of the pathetic parts of tragedy, while her genuine comic genius would have qualified her to do justice to the elegant gayety of Rosalind, as well as for the intriguing artifice of the Country Wife. The distress which she suffered abroad is affectingly described by Sir Jonah Barrington, in his very entertaining *Reminiscences*; but this distress must have resulted from some unfortunate mistake or misconception, for while she was abroad, Mr. Barton, an officer in the Royal Mint, and private secretary to an illustrious personage, assured me, that he had 2500*l.* at her disposal whenever she demanded it; and Mr. Barton's character for integrity, as well as high scientific attainments, is held in the utmost respect.

## CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. MACAULAY, the historian. This lady was the sister of Alderman Sawbridge, and agreed with him in all his republican notions. According to report, she was almost as fond of cards as her brother the alderman was of politics. One evening, as she was playing at whist, she was so long deliberating what card to put down, that Dr. Monsey, who was one of the party, and distinguished for blunt sincerity, told her that the table had waited for her some time. She expressed great surprise as well as resentment at such a rebuke, as she said she was known to be always very quick at cards. "Well," said the doctor, "if so, yours, madam, is a new species of celerity." The rest of the company could not help laughing at a declaration so contrary to her practice, which increased the spleen of the lady.

While she was employed on her "History of England," she visited the British Museum, and desired to see the letters which had passed between King James the First and his favourite the Duke of Buckingham, whom his majesty used to address under the name of Stennie. Dr. Birch, whose duty was to take care of the papers, attended her for that purpose. The doctor, who was well acquainted with the contents of those papers, and knew many of them to be very obscene, requested that she would permit him to select a certain portion for her perusal, observing that many of them were wholly unfit for the inspection of any one of her sex. "Phoo," said she, "an historian is of no sex," and then deliberately read through all.

She consulted the noted Dr. Graham upon the state of her health, and the doctor, who knew that she had money, contrived to introduce his brother to her as a better adviser than himself. She soon forgot that "an historian was of no sex," married him at a time of life when she ought to have been wiser, and then lost all her historical reputation. She, however, soon after published a tract, which she oddly entitled, "*Loose thoughts* on literary property," and thereby exposed herself to the raillery of the newspaper wits.

I knew Dr. Graham very well. He was a sensible and, as far as I could judge, an extremely well-informed man, both generally and professionally. Being too fond of notoriety, he was considered a quack, and having lost the good opinion of his medical brethren, he became careless of his medical character, adopted expedients for support of a licentious description, and died in great distress. When sober, he was a remarkably well-bred man, with most polished manners; but when he had confused his senses with ether, of which he carried a bottle which was constantly at his nose, he used to walk in a morning-dress through the streets, and scowl with misanthropic gloom upon those whom he appeared most to esteem when his faculties were clear. He seemed to consider me one of his favourites,



but when I have met him in one of his wandering moments, he has frowned upon me with so terrific an aspect, as if he considered me his bitterest enemy, that I found it necessary to make a hasty retreat in order to avoid a mob.

When he lived in Pall Mall, I sometimes called on him in the evening, and used to find him on a straw bed with one of his children. His hair was dressed as if he had been going on a visit. There was always a clean sheet over his straw bed. His conversation was grave and intelligent, and his manners easy and polite. His earth-bathing and his other quackeries are too well known to the public to require any notice in this place. He was a tall, handsome man, and if he had remained stationary at his first residence in Pall Mall, where he was successful in practice as a regular physician, he would have held a respectable rank, but his recourse to empirical expedients of a licentious kind exposed him to disgrace and ruin. He possessed a fine collection of preparations representing diseases of the eye, which I have reason to think had been formerly the property of my grandfather, the Chevalier Taylor. Indeed I do not believe that the doctor was particularly conversant with diseases of the eye, though at one period he held himself forward as an experienced oculist. What became of Mrs. Macaulay, or his brother, I never heard.

I may relate an odd incident in the life of Dr. Birch. He was very fond of angling, and devoted much time to that amusement. In order to deceive the fish, he had a dress constructed, which, when he put it on, made him appear like an old tree. His arms he conceived would appear like branches, and the line like a long spray. In this sylvan attire he used to take root by the side of a favourite stream, and imagined that his motions might seem to the fish to be the effect of the wind. He pursued this amusement for some years in the same habit, till he was ridiculed out of it by his friends. His biographical work, well known by the name of "Birch's Lives," giving a brief history of many memorable characters noticed in our annals, displays great industry and research, but no great judgment or literary excellence; the work, however, is rendered valuable by portraits engraved by Vertue and Houbraken. The latter was the better artist, and it was said that when original pictures could not be found, a description of the person was sent to Houbraken, who resided in Holland, drew the portraits according to the description, and then made the engraving. It is hardly possible that Dr. Birch, who was a respectable man, could have practised such an imposition upon the public, even supposing it not likely to be discovered.

The great DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH. Archdeacon Coxe, whose historical works evince vast research, industry, and judgment, in his memoirs of this illustrious hero, describes him as having retained his mental powers to the close of his life. The fact, however, is, that long before his death he sank into childish imbecility, as I have already stated. The following lines of Dr. Johnson would indeed demonstrate this fact, as he could not be supposed to found them

otherwise than upon good authority, if I had not stronger proof to offer on the subject.

In life's last scenes what prodigies surprise,  
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise :  
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow.  
And Swift expires a driveler and a show.

Before I proceed with my records, I may not improperly cite some lines of a similar nature from Churchill, and leave the reader to compare and decide upon their respective merits.

What bitter pangs must humbled genius feel,  
In their last hours to view a Swift and Steele,  
To drivel out whole years of idiot breath,  
And sit the monuments of living death !

On one occasion, when the great Lord Chesterfield was present, the Duchess of Marlborough was urging the duke to take some medicine, contrary to his inclination. At length she said, vehemently, "Do, my lord, take it, I'll be hanged if it will not do you good." Lord Chesterfield joined in her grace's intreaty, and slyly said, "Take it, my lord, it will certainly do you good *one way or other*."

A relation of her grace, of an eccentric character, and who was commonly called Jack Spencer, used always to pay his respects to her on her birth-day. On one occasion he went in a chairman's coat, which he threw off in her presence, and appeared naked. Her grace remonstrated with him on such a shameless appearance. "Shameless !" said he, "Why I am in my *birth-day suit*."

Another time, for a wager, he drove a hackney-coach through the streets quite naked. He was very properly taken before a magistrate, who having heard who he was, and with what family he was connected, mildly expostulated with him on the indecency of his appearance. "Indecency ! how do you mean ?" said Spencer. "In being naked," the magistrate replied. "Naked ! why I was born so," rejoined Spencer, with an affected simplicity, as a man might be supposed to evince who had some natural deformity.

One of his whimsical freaks was to take a hackney-coach with three friends in a dark evening, and order the man to set them down in a gloomy part of the Strand at the side of the New Church. He had previously opened the door opposite to that where the coachman waited, and as Spencer and his friends quitted the coach on one side, they went round and entered at the other. The coachman was at first surprised that more issued from the carriage than he had taken in. As they continued to go round and come out, he became dreadfully alarmed, and at length his terror was so great that he ran from the coach, and rushed into the first public-house, telling the people there he must have taken in a legion of devils, for, he added with every sign of horror, that he had only taken four in, but had counted eighteen out, and that more were coming when he left his coach.



It is said that he once contrived to collect a party of hunch-backed men to dine with him, some of whom indignantly quitted the table.

Another whimsical party which he assembled at his house consisted merely of a number of persons all of whom stuttered; but this meeting at first threatened serious consequences, for each supposed he was mocked by the other, and it was with great difficulty that their host restored peace, by acknowledging the ludicrous purpose of his invitation.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

**MR. JAMES BOSWELL.** Soon after Mr. Burke was appointed army-paymaster, I dined at the governor's table, on the anniversary of his majesty's birth-day; and in the course of conversation, Mr. Burke said, in answer to something that fell from Boswell, "I can account for Boswell's jacobitism, which, with all his present loyalty, he never will get rid of; when he was a child he was taken to see Prince Charles at Edinburgh. The sight of a fine young man coming upon a great occasion splendidly attired, with drums, trumpets, &c., surrounded by heroic chieftains, and all the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance' attending the scene, made an impression on his imagination that never can be effaced." Boswell admitted that this impression on his mind still remained in vivid strength, notwithstanding all his attachment to the House of Hanover. Boswell then told the story of what passed that morning between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Windham.

Mr. Windham had been appointed secretary to the Irish government, and called upon Dr. Johnson, expressing his fears that his habits had been so different from those of a public functionary, that he feared he was not qualified for the situation. "Don't be afraid, sir," said Johnson, "the subordinates will do all the business, and as for the rest, take my word for it you will make a very pretty rascal." The company, which was very numerous, laughed heartily at this anecdote, and Mr. Burke loudly said, "That is so like Johnson." Boswell has said to me more than once, "I should not die happy if I were not to see Grand Cairo," but if he stated the grounds of his curiosity I have forgotten them. He was however of a roving turn, and if he had been gratified with a sight of that place, he would have been restless till he had beheld some other.

The last, or nearly the last time I saw Boswell, I met him in Henrietta-street, Covent Garden. I told him that I was disengaged, and was going to dine at a chop-house, and asked him if we should take a chop and a bottle together. He said no, he was going to dine in the city, and added, "I must keep in with those men." His reason was, perhaps, that he might have a chance of being one of the city.

counsel, or of attaining some higher city honour, not without the attendant advantage of the good fare connected with such offices. The only time I ever offended him was, when at one of the dinners given by the Royal Academy on the birth-day of the late Queen Charlotte, I proposed, in a convivial moment, as he liked to see original characters, to introduce Dr. Wolcot, *olim* Peter Pindar, to him. He answered vehemently and indignantly, that he never would know that man, for he had abused the king; though it is very probable his loyalty on this occasion was not unmixed with the resentment which he felt at the doctor's poetical epistle to James Boswell. Wolcot would have had no objection to take him by the hand, and it was a settled point with him never in the slightest degree to attack those whom he had before satirized, after he became at all acquainted with them. On the contrary, when he became acquainted with the ingenious Mrs. Cosway, whom he had ridiculed in his "Odes to Painters," he changed the tone of his lyre, and wrote some elegant verses in praise of her talents and personal worth.

It is no wonder that Mr. Boswell was universally well received. He was full of anecdote, well acquainted with the most distinguished characters, good-humoured, and ready at repartee. There was a kind of jovial bluntness in his manner, which threw off all restraint even with strangers, and immediately kindled a social familiarity. His brother, Sir Alexander Boswell, was of a more conciliating disposition. I was a little acquainted with him, and he, knowing my intimacy with Dr. Wolcot, requested I would make them acquainted. I expressed some surprise, as he had attacked his brother—"Pooh," said he, "that was fun, and not malice. He is a man of original genius, and I should like to know him." The introduction never took place, for the worthy baronet, who had himself a turn for satire, by too free an exertion of his pen, was involved in a quarrel, and unfortunately lost his life in a duel.

MR. JAMES BOSWELL, junior. This gentleman was the son of the biographer of Dr. Johnson. I had the pleasure to be more intimate with him than I was with his father. As far as I can presume to judge, he had a sounder intellect than his father, though it is hardly to be supposed, that had the same opportunities occurred to him, he could have produced a work equal in interest and merit to the life of the great moralist. He was more cautious in conversation, but not less disposed to partake of social enjoyment. Indeed he inherited the father's love of convivial pleasure. He was a barrister, and generally reputed to be a man of learning. His merit entitled him to all the friends of his father, particularly Mr. Malone, Mr. Windham, General Paoli, and the present Marquis of Lansdown. He devoted a great part of the morning to reading, but from his habits, and the general tenor of his conversation, I rather think more for literary gratification than for the study of his profession. His knowledge of the floating literature of the day, particularly any interesting poetry or striking novels, was evident; and referring to any works from his recommen-



dation, I had always reason to respect his taste and to rely upon his judgment.

When he had ended his morning studies, or rather amusements, he used to sally forth, and pay a round of visits to his friends, as he used freely to say, in hopes among them "to spring a dinner;" for he "strolled a bachelor's merry life," as the song has it. He lived very retired in the morning at his chambers in the Temple, and very few, if any, of his friends were admitted when they called. It is very probable that he never dined in his chambers during the whole year, as he was fond of company, and always a welcome guest at any friend's table. Sometimes in convivial parties the conversation has, perhaps, been of too free a tendency, and I have heard it indulged with some latitude in the presence of Mr. Boswell, junior; but I must do him the justice to say, that he always discouraged every thing of a licentious description, and never uttered any thing of the kind in my presence, nor do I believe anywhere else.

Not long before his death, which I doubt not was sincerely regretted by all who knew him, he was appointed one of the commissioners of bankrupts. I met him soon after, and in the freedom of friendship, asked him if he found it a lucrative post. His answer was, "No, not yet, but we look to the hops." I naturally inferred that he expected failures from hop speculations, though I imagine he said so more from humour than sincerity, as I believe he was too liberal to wish to derive advantage from misfortune.

The last time I saw him was at the hospitable table of the late Mr. John Kemble, who was equally adverse to all licentious discourse, whether concerning morals or religion. After the ladies were withdrawn, some topic arose on which we all differed. I forget the topic, but conclude that it was of the dramatic kind, as that was what chiefly engrossed the attention of Mr. Kemble. Mr. Kemble, I remember, was very fluent, and, as I thought at the time, very shrewd and intelligent. Mr. Boswell was naturally inclined to a sort of hesitation, which made him repeat his words, and the influence of wine rendered him more so than usual, insomuch that he retired from the argument, and left the field to Kemble, who had it all to himself, as I was never disposed to talk, but to listen, on a subject which he had theoretically studied, and concerning an art in which he so practically excelled. How Mr. Boswell reached home that night I could not conceive, for he was too proud to suffer me to accompany him.

Here I cannot help adverting to the progress of time and events. The first time I ever saw Mr. James Boswell, junior, was in the first gallery of the Haymarket Theatre, at the benefit of the widow and family of Dr. Glover. He was then quite a boy, and stood on the bench while his father held him round the waist. The play was "The Merchant of Venice," and the farce "Love a-la-mode." I am sorry to say that the theatre was but thinly attended, as is too often the case on charitable occasions. My late friend, Jack Johnstone, sung a song in character, each verse ending with the word "*Whack*," which he gave with great power of lungs. Little Boswell was so de-

lighted with this song, that his father roared for a repetition with a stentorian voice, to please the child, and Johnstone readily sang it again. Little could I think that, in the progress of time, this boy would become a man whose talents and attainments I should admire, whose worth I should respect, and to whom I should look for pleasure and improvement.

Dr. Glover, whom I have just mentioned, was a native of Ireland, and by profession a surgeon. He ventured upon the stage for a while, but resumed his practice as a surgeon. A peculiar incident in his life had rendered him conspicuous. A man was hanged in Dublin (I believe), and the body, after execution, being removed to Dr. Glover's house, was restored by him to life, and as the man's crime had not been of a very atrocious nature, and he had suffered the sentence of the law, though the circumstance had excited much notice, it was passed over by the Irish government. Dr. Glover, however, was ill-rewarded by the culprit for his kindness and skill; for, whenever the man wanted money, he always applied to the doctor, alleging that as he had thought proper to restore him to life, he was bound to maintain him. Sometimes he called his preserver his father, for having brought him to life, and annoyed him in this manner for a long time. At length the doctor came to London, intending to settle in his profession. His wit, humour, and social qualities procured him so many connexions, that he was every day engaged with some convivial party, but derived little from his business. My father, who was a convivial man himself, became acquainted with Dr. Glover, and introduced me to him. He was a tall, lusty, fine-looking man, and his open manly countenance gave effect to his jocularities.

There was a tavern in Fleet-street, called the Globe; which was the chief scene of his nocturnal festivity. Among the members of the club whom I knew were Mr. William Woodfall, Mr. Ross the actor, Mr. Cooke the barrister and friend of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Hugh Kelly the author, and Mr. Akerman the keeper of Newgate, a very worthy and humane character. There were several other members, but as I passed only one evening with them, I do not know their names. I felt myself too young to offer myself as a member.

As Dr. Glover was the life of the company, it was delicately proposed, as his finances were by no means equal to those of the rest of the members individually, that he should be considered as common property, and never be called upon in the general reckonings. During this necessary, but painful adjustment, the doctor always contrived to fall into a nap till it was over. It is melancholy to reflect, that a man of worth and talents should have been obliged to resort to such an expedient to conceal his feelings. At length Mr. Thorpe, the landlord, pitying the situation of poor Glover, and knowing that he was the magnet of the club, proposed to him that he should not be subject to this trespass upon his feelings, but that his share of the night's expenses should be placed to account, giving the doctor delicately to understand that he should never be called upon. As this plan was concealed from the company, the doctor was able to assume an inde-



pendent air, and by the sallies of his humour he afforded increased pleasure to the members.

He survived his friend Hugh Kelly, and, according to report, wrote the biographical sketch which is prefixed to the quarto volume of that writer's dramatic works, published for the benefit of his widow. After a lapse of more than thirty years, I was surprised with a visit from this lady, who knew that Mr. Kelly had been intimate with my father, and had been kind to me in permitting me to call on him, morning and evening, in my youth, and favouring me with the use of his library. Mrs. Kelly had been married again to a Colonel Davis, and had lost her second husband. She was near eighty years of age when she resumed her acquaintance with me. She retained all the vivacity of her early days, and related many anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Garrick, and many other of her first husband's literary friends. She died in the year 1826, while I was out of town, or I should probably have been invited to follow her remains to the grave.

The last time I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Glover was in the lobby of Covent Garden Theatre, surrounded by a knot of juvenile critics, who were conversing on the character of Shakspeare's "Richard the Third." "For my part," said the doctor, "if I were to perform the character, as Richard is possessed of wit and humour, I should represent him, like Falstaff, with an air of jovial freedom and spirit," and he then recited a passage in the manner he had suggested. The juvenile critics all expressed their surprise, but the doctor supported his declared opinion by so many apt quotations, so much humour and specious reasoning, that if they were not convinced, they were, at least, highly entertained with his ingenuity.

Dr. Glover soon after died, and in such indifferent circumstances, that, as I have said, his friends supported a benefit for his widow and children, and I never after heard of them. Indeed I never knew the doctor in his domestic state, never saw any of his family, or knew where he lived.

Mr. Akerman, whom I have mentioned as one of the club at the Globe, was a plain, sensible man, who had seen the world, and of a remarkably kind and generous disposition, considering his melancholy occupation, but in point of literary taste was by no means qualified for the witty and intelligent society who met at that tavern. I remember, after having avowed my respect to Mr. Akerman for his moral qualities, once expressing my surprise to my friend Mr. William Woodfall, that a man so little capable of contributing to the wit and hilarity of the place should be a member. His whimsical and somewhat ludicrous answer was, "Why, sir, Dick Akerman provides at least good *coinciding conversation*." The jovial power of Glover bore down all before it; but next to him in attractive discourse must have been Ross, whose *talk*, to use a favourite word with Dr. Johnson, more strongly resembled the arch, shrewd dialogue of Congreve's gentleman, than I have ever observed in any other person, except Joe Richardson, though he unfortunately had a Northumberland burr,

which prevented what he said from being at first distinctly understood.

It is mentioned to the honour of Ross, that when "The Rosciad" was first published, and he was told it was a severe attack upon the whole community of actors, himself among the number, he immediately said, in the words of Cato:—

"I should have blush'd if Cato's house had stood  
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war."

Mr. Stephen Kemble was an actor of considerable merit, and only precluded from representing the first heroic characters by his extraordinary bulk. He was a remarkably handsome man. He had been apprenticed to a surgeon in some provincial town, but his devotion to the stage induced him to resign his profession. He had a strong sense of humour in private life, and related anecdotes, particularly of the theatrical kind, with admirable effect. He also possessed poetical talents, which appear to advantage in a large octavo volume published by subscription. His skill in recitation was so well known, that he was generally requested in company to indulge them with some passage, which he chiefly repeated from Shakspeare. He was so fat that he required no stuffing to appear in Falstaff, which character he supported with a flowing manly humour, and, I may venture to say, with a critical knowledge of his author. All characters of an open, blunt nature, and requiring a vehement expression of justice and integrity, particularly those exemplifying an honest indignation against vice, he delivered in so forcible a manner as to show obviously that he was developing his own feelings and character. This manner was very successfully displayed in his representation of the Governor, in the opera of "Inkle and Yarico."

He had experienced all the vicissitudes of a theatrical life in provincial theatres, if they may be so styled, but by prudence, good conduct, and the general respect in which his character and talents were held, he surmounted all difficulties, and was able to leave a competency to his widow. Indeed, his wife had essentially contributed to the improvement of his fortune. She had acquired a well-merited reputation for her talents as an actress at Covent Garden Theatre, under her maiden name of Miss Satchell.

Mr. Stephen Kemble made his first appearance at the same theatre, in the character of Othello. Though stout in person, he was not then of a size that precluded him from performing any of the higher order of characters. He was soon attracted by the person and talents of Miss Satchell, and they were married. Their conjugal state was marked by mutual attachment, as I had abundant opportunities of knowing, for I married one of her sisters, who was admired by all who knew her for her personal beauty and the excellent qualities of her mind. All who had been acquainted with her deeply sympathized with me when I had the misery of losing her, about nine months after our union. Twelve years elapsed before I again



married, and I have reason to declare that I have not been less fortunate in my second choice, after a union of nearly thirty years.

Mr. Stephen Kemble was so little scrupulous in relating the untoward events of his theatrical life, that I may advert to them here, as they may operate as a warning to young candidates for theatrical fame, and prevent them from rashly quitting a regular employment which might lead them to independence, one of the first of earthly blessings. He said that before his marriage, when he was in one of the towns of Yorkshire, where a large barn was formed into a sort of theatre, the performances were so little attractive that he and the rest of the Thespian party were reduced to the greatest extremities, unable not only to defray the expense of their lodgings, but even to provide food for the passing day. He was persecuted by his landlady, whose wretched garret he occupied, with the daily question, "Why don't you pay your charges?" and in order to disguise the necessity of abstinence, he remained two days in bed under pretence of indisposition. On the third day he ventured to sally forth, and at the distance of three miles luckily discovered a turnip-field, which he entered, and there made a cold but most acceptable repast. The next day as he was proceeding to the same hospitable banquet, the late Mr. Davenport, husband of the present popular actress of Covent Garden Theatre, who was one of this wandering tribe of Thespians, met Mr. Kemble, declared he was nearly famished, and earnestly entreated for some assistance. Mr. Kemble, whom no distress could deprive of fortitude and good-humour, told Mr. Davenport that it was a lucky meeting, for he was going to dine with a friend, and could take the liberty of bringing a friend with him. Here was another difficulty to poor Davenport, who said his shoes were so cracked that he was ashamed of going into company, proposing that he should cover them in part with mud, in order, if possible, to conceal the fissures. Mr. Kemble assured him that the friend to whom they were going was wholly devoid of ceremony, and would care nothing whether he was well or ill shod. They then proceeded on their journey, but Davenport, nearly exhausted by the condition of his stomach, made heavy complaints of the length of the way. Kemble endeavoured to raise his spirits, assuring him that he would find an ample feast and no unwelcome greeting. At length they reached the vegetable pantry, and Kemble congratulated him on having arrived at the hospitable mansion of his friend. Davenport looked around with anxiety for a house, and then cast a look of dejection and reproach at Kemble for having deceived him at so distressing a crisis. Kemble pointed to the turnip-field, and said, "This is my only friend; it afforded me a dinner yesterday, and I suppose I shall be obliged to trespass on the same kindness till the end of the week." Davenport, who was a sensible and respectable man, though an inferior actor, assumed better spirits, and said with a smile, "Well, I confess, though I do not find the fare I expected, you have brought me to an ample table and no spare diet."

Mr. Davenport was some years after engaged with his wife at

Covent Garden Theatre, and always supported the characters allotted to him with good sense and propriety. After his former sufferings, it is to be regretted that he did not live to profit by the popularity of his wife, as he always acted the part of a good husband and father.

Mr. Kemble used to relate an incident of a more whimsical description. He said that while he was manager of a theatre at Portsmouth, which was only opened twice or thrice in the week, a sailor applied to him on one of the nights when there was no performance, and entreated him to open the theatre, but was informed that, as the town had not been apprized on the occasion, the manager could not risk the expense. "What will it cost to open the house to-night, for to-morrow I leave the country, and God knows if I shall ever see a play again," said the sailor. Mr. Kemble told him that it would be five guineas. "Well," said the careless tar, "I will give it upon this condition, that you will let nobody into the house but myself and the actors." He was then asked what play he would choose. He fixed upon "Richard the Third." The house was immediately lighted, the rest of the performers attended, and the tar took his station in the front row of the pit; Mr. Kemble performed the part of Richard, the play happening to be what is styled one of the *stock-pieces* of the company. The play was performed throughout; the sailor was very attentive, sometimes laughing and applauding, but frequently on the *look-out* lest some other auditor might intrude upon his enjoyment. He retired perfectly satisfied, and cordially thanked the manager for his ready compliance. It may seem strange that a sailor, who in general is reputed to be a generous character, should require so selfish an indulgence; but it hardly need be observed, that whims and oddities are to be found in all classes of so changeable a being as man.

Here I shall take leave of my old friend Stephen Kemble, who was as manly a character as I ever knew, and whose memory I sincerely respect.

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

REV. THOMAS MAURICE. This gentleman united the characters of the profound scholar and the animated poet. He was educated under Dr. Parr, and always entertained the highest respect for his master. Mr. Maurice was an historian as well as a poet, and his "*Indian Antiquities*" is a work of great research, admirable illustration, and valuable intelligence. He published a volume of poems, and many occasional productions of the same kind. His last work, in three parts, was styled "*Memoirs of an Author*," in which he details his own literary life and connexions. He was one of the officers of the British Museum, where I first met him at the apartments of Mr. Penneck. I have also met him at the table of James



Brogden, Esq., M.P.; at the table of my late friend Dr. George Pearson, M.D.; and at that of the late Dr. Kitchener.

The conversation of Mr. Maurice was lively, acute, and fertile. He often quoted from classical authors, Roman and Greek, and very often from Shakspeare. His quotations were always apt, and sometimes applied with great humour. No man enjoyed or laughed more heartily at the jokes of others. I know nothing of his private history, except that he had lost an excellent wife, and his affliction on that loss had induced him to resort to the consolation of the bottle, to which in his latter days he became too much attached. He favoured me with his friendship, and I had an opportunity of showing my respect for his talents in occasional reviews of some of his literary productions.

The last time I had the pleasure of seeing him was when I dined with him at the late Dr. Kitchener's, and saw him safe at night to the British Museum. He had indulged himself rather too much with the glass after dinner, and being very talkative, he became an object of ridicule to some other guests at the table, who had no pretensions to compete with him in intellectual powers, attainments, or humour. I rose in his defence, but he was roused by the attack, stopped me, and vindicated himself with so much pleasant raillery, and retorted upon them with so much satirical playfulness, that he made them ashamed of themselves, and converted disrespect into esteem and admiration.

I shall close this account of a gentleman whom I sincerely respected for his learning, his talents, his companionable qualities, and his friendly disposition, with a copy of the last letter which I received from him on the publication of his Memoirs, as I am proud of his friendship.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

My late severe illness must be my excuse for not sending the accompanying before. I print only two hundred and fifty, and am compelled to restrict myself in presentations; but my good friend Taylor, so old and kind a patron of my works, both in prose and poetry, has a decided claim to every production of his faithful and obliged

THOMAS MAURICE.

British Museum,  
14th April, 1821.

DR. PARR. I never had the pleasure of knowing this gentleman, and only once saw him, but having mentioned him in connexion with Mr. Maurice, I will relate one anecdote of him upon indisputable authority, and which has not, I believe, been recorded in any of the numerous memoirs which appeared after his death. During the trial, or rather the persecution of Mr. Hastings, Burke, Fox, and Sheridan were in company with Parr, who thought proper to give his opinion of the respective speeches of Fox and Sheridan on that

memorable event. The doctor was diffusive in his comments on the last two, mixing censure with panegyric, but said nothing on Burke's speech. Burke paced the room some time in evident expectation; the doctor however remained silent. At length Burke, who could restrain his impatience no longer, said, "You have made an able comment on the speeches of my two friends with acute, judicious, and eloquent impartiality, but as you say nothing upon my speech on the subject, I conclude you are too delicate to greet me with mere praise, and that you could not discover any faults in it." "Not so, Edmund," replied the doctor, "your speech was oppressed by epithet, dislocated by parentheses, and debilitated by amplification."

The following story is told of Dr. Parr, but I do not pretend to vouch for its authenticity. It seems he did not live happily with his first wife, and had a cat that was a greater favourite. When he returned home one day, and was going into his library, the feelings of a previous domestic feud not having subsided on either part, on opening the room door something bobbed forcibly on his face. Upon examination he found that his favourite cat had been hanged, and placed in that situation on purpose to annoy him. Upon discovering this, he suddenly hastened to a portrait of his wife and cut the throat, exclaiming with vehemence, "Thus would I serve the original if the law would permit me."

This reminds me of another strange connubial squabble. A tradesman and his wife having had a bitter quarrel, in order to appease their fury they threw all their portable furniture out of window. The wife then drew the bed to the window, ripped the ticking, and set all the feathers afloat in the open air, then rushing to the banisters of the stairs and breaking her arm upon them, with an insane energy exclaimed, "Now, you scoundrel, you must pay for a surgeon!"

DR. JOHNSON. It is not improbable that my father might have been introduced to Dr. Johnson through the medium of Oldys, or even of Derrick, but of this I have no proof. I was too young for such an introduction, and if I had not, I should not have been more afraid of him than I was at first of Dr. Monsey, who was as rough in his manners, but by no means so domineering and brutal. I have often heard my friend Mr. Cooke the barrister, who was rather a favourite with Johnson, say that there was no living with him except by yielding to him with slavish submission.

Johnson was inconsistent in his character, for how could his despotism and violence be reconciled with his reverence for Christianity, when his manners were totally opposite to those of its meek and gentle founder? He was also inconsistent in his opinions, of which one proof is sufficient in this place. In his "*Life of Pope*," he says, "His unjustifiable impression of *The Patriot King*, as it can be imputed to no particular motive, (why not?) must have proceeded from his general habit of secrecy and cunning; he caught an opportunity of a sly trick, and pleased himself with the thought of out-



witting Bolingbroke." Here then he assigns a motive. But is it possible to suppose that Pope should be ambitious of so silly and contemptible a triumph? Yet a few pages after, he says, "His violation of the trust reposed in him by Bolingbroke, could have no motive inconsistent with the warmest affection; he either thought the action so near to indifferent that he forgot it, or so laudable that he expected his friend to approve it." At length he finally agrees with Warburton, who, he says, "supposes, with great appearance of reason, that the irregularity of his conduct proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bolingbroke, who might, perhaps, have destroyed the pamphlet, which Pope thought it his duty to preserve, even without its author's approbation." This motive might be supposed to occur at first to every man of plain understanding, for it never can be conceived that Pope desired the despicable profit of selling the copies, for which he must have waited till the author's death; nor that he wanted the reputation of having written the pamphlet, since it is probable that he gave to Bolingbroke the few copies which he required for his friends, and that Bolingbroke presented them as he intended. The same motive of zealous friendship might be expected to occur to Bolingbroke, whose rancour on the subject after Pope's death was wholly unjustifiable. Pope has gratified the world so much by his genius, that it is but a general duty to vindicate his memory.

Dr. Johnson was long a bigoted Jacobite. When he was walking with some friends in Kensington Gardens, one of them observed that it was a fine place. "Phoo," said Johnson, "nothing can be fine that belongs to a usurper." Dr. Monsey assured me, that once in company, when the conversation was on the age of King George the Third, he heard him say, "What does it signify when such an animal was born, or whether he ever existed?" Yet he afterward said, in his account of his interview with his majesty, that it was not for him "to bandy compliments with *his sovereign*."

Johnson was often too dogmatical and decisive to distinguish clearly. He says in his "Life of Pope," "Aristotle is praised for naming fortitude first of the cardinal virtues, as that without which no other virtue can steadily be practised; but he might with equal propriety have placed prudence and justice before it, since without prudence, fortitude is mad; without justice it is mischievous." The doctor here seems to consider fortitude as active valour. Surely the proper arrangement would be temperance to secure the power of acting, prudence to act properly, justice to respect the rights of others, and fortitude to bear firmly the evils of life.

Mr. Godwin, I understand, has said that no *original thought* can be found in all the works of Johnson. Admitting this assertion to be well founded, it may, however, be justly urged in his favour, that, to use his own words, he has "recommended known truths by his manner of adorning them;" that he has "varied the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions." He has given dignity to the English language, and a body of criticism upon the English poets, written in a masterly style,

and, with some exceptions, generally with acuteness, judgment, and liberality. But I may venture at least to say, that Mr. Godwin has overlooked one instance in which Johnson has shown a new, ingenious, and liberal vindication of a passage in Dryden, for which that great poet was annoyed by persevering ridicule, and appeared unable to defend himself.

The passage is as follows :

“A horrid *stillness* first invades the ear,  
And in that silence we a tempest *fear*.”

“for which,” says Johnson, “he was persecuted with perpetual ridicule, perhaps with more than was deserved. *Silence* is, indeed, mere privation ; and so considered, cannot *invade* ; but privation likewise certainly is *darkness*, and probably cold ; yet poetry has never been refused the right of ascribing effects or agency to them as to positive powers. No man scruples to say that *darkness* hinders him from his work ; or that cold has killed the plants. Death is also privation, yet who has made any difficulty of assigning to death a dart and the power of striking ?”

This is certainly a very ingenious defence of what it would be very difficult to justify in any other manner, but which, after all, may rather be considered as ingenious sophistry than sound argument : still, it is *original*.

THOMAS TYERS, Esq. This gentleman was the son of the original projector and proprietor of Vauxhall Gardens. He received a good education, and was bred to the bar, but was of too sensitive a disposition for wrangling courts, and having inherited a liberal competency, he relinquished the law, and devoted himself to friendship and literary pursuits. Having a turn for poetry, he furnished many songs for Vauxhall Gardens, which were very popular in their day, and which, if not characterized by wit and humour, were always recommended by sentiment, feeling, and pastoral simplicity. He was a great literary purveyor, and according to Johnson, in his “*Life of Pope*,” ascertained the doubtful point of what business the poet’s father had pursued, which Mr. Tyers discovered to have been that of a linen-draper.

Mr. Tyers was very intimate with Johnson, and was one of his earliest visitors in the morning. But though Johnson held him in great esteem, and felt much relief from his conversation and his accounts of public occurrences, yet Mr. Tyers, with all the mildness of his own character, could not escape Johnson’s rough asperity. When Mr. Tyers called on him one morning, and told him that he had just taken chambers which had been occupied by Sir Fletcher Norton, “I wish,” said the surly censor, “that you had taken his understanding at the same time.”

Mr. Tyers was the author of innumerable productions, which he published anonymously, and chiefly in the Public Advertiser, then the chief daily journal, and possessing numerous and valuable con-



tributors. He put his name to "A Sketch of the Life of Pope," to another of the Life of Addison, and to one, I believe, of a Life of Johnson. He wrote many dialogues of the dead, a species of composition to which he was very partial, and which having given to the Public Advertiser, he collected into a volume, and published with his name. He was very good tempered, and very communicative. I had the pleasure of knowing him for many years, and when we met in the street, our interviews were not very short, for I listened with pleasure and instruction to his intelligent conversation, and he was always kindly ready to prolong it.

One day passing his apartments in Southampton-street, Covent Garden, he called me in, and gave me a profile print of himself, saying, "There, take that, but I am no framer and glazier." The print was engraved from a drawing in crayons, by my old friend Mr. Taylor the artist, who was a pupil of the celebrated Frank Hayman; and the drawing is now in the possession of Mrs. Barrett, the niece of Mr. Tyers, and the old friend of Johnson, Garrick, Goldsmith, and all the wits of her youth, when she probably attracted them.

WILLIAM TAYLOR, Esq. This gentleman, a native of Scotland, who was generally styled "Opera Taylor," from his having become proprietor of the King's Theatre, was an early acquaintance of mine. He had been one of the clerks in a banking-house that failed, before he was known to the world at large. Sheridan, on some emergency, not uncommon with him, being then connected with the King's Theatre, wanted a thousand pounds. Taylor heard of this necessity, and having contrived to raise that sum, offered it to Mr. Sheridan, upon having security on his share in that theatre. The bargain was struck on this condition; and Taylor, who possessed what is called a strong head, and was gifted with a "second sight" of possible advantages, contrived by degrees to become the chief, if not the sole proprietor of the Italian Opera House, and afterward a member of the House of Commons.

He soon after formed a connexion with Signora Prudom, an Italian singer, and there is reason to believe that he was actually married to her. How his harsh Scotch dialect, and he knew no other language, could harmonize with her melodious tongue, it is difficult to conceive. By extravagance in living, and without any solid pecuniary foundation, he became much embarrassed, and was obliged to mortgage his property in the King's Theatre, and at length was under such difficulties that it was thought impossible he could ever recover his property. The matter came before Lord Thurlow, when he was lord chancellor, and here occurred "the glorious uncertainty of the law." Lord Thurlow, on examining the claim of Mr. Taylor, said, that "No magnifying power could render his right visible." Yet Mr. Taylor regained his authority over the King's Theatre, and disposed of it to other hands.

Pending a subsequent suit on the same subject and before the same lord, there happened a proof of the danger of judicial joking, for his lordship having animadverted on the complicated and inex-

plicable state of the Opera House, said, that he thought "Nothing but a good fire could extinguish the perplexity." His lordship's hint was taken, and in a short time after, the Opera House was destroyed by a fire, the purpose of which was to get rid of Sir John Gallini, and to remove all impediments to the restoration of Mr. Taylor. I knew the person who was supposed to have promoted this conflagration, and who, it was reported, soon after sunk into the grave from dejection on the disappointment of his hopes, rather than repentance for his crime. The trustees of the King's Theatre then employed my old friend Mr. James Wyat, R.A. to convert this beautiful Pantheon into an Opera House, which enabled them to carry on the performances.

During the performances at the Pantheon Theatre, the Opera House being soon rebuilt, Mr. Taylor, knowing my friendship with Mrs. Billington, and overrating my interest with her, applied to me to desire that I would endeavour to induce her to accept an engagement with him in some musical undertaking which he had projected for opening the old theatre in the Haymarket. I told him that I did not think I had so much influence with Mrs. Billington, but that if I had, I could not exert it, as Mr. William Sheldon, one of the trustees of the Pantheon, had been instrumental in procuring me the appointment of oculist to his majesty George the Third, and I should be therefore ungrateful indeed, if I in any measure opposed that gentleman. This refusal on my part, as gratitude always appeared to Mr. Taylor to be a needless restraint, deprived me of his *friendship*; and as the state of his affairs rendered it necessary that he should live in *retirement*, I hardly ever saw him afterward. Mr. Jewell, his treasurer, and the treasurer of the Haymarket, kept up a connexion with him till his death, but how Taylor was able to live it is difficult to conjecture. He survived Mr. Jewell, who was a very worthy man.

PROFESSOR PORSON. The first time I met this literary leviathan was at the house of the Rev. Mr. Peters, one evening, when he was accompanied by Dr. White, the author of the celebrated "Bampton Lectures." It was invidiously discovered or reprehensibly betrayed by Mr. Badcock, that he had given essential assistance to the doctor in the composition of those lectures. It may reasonably be inferred, that Mr. Badcock assisted Dr. White from motives of friendship or of interest. In either case he violated confidence. If he gave his assistance from friendship, his disclosure was vain and treacherous; if from interest, it was mean and unjust; for it is probable that the doctor would not have solicited or purchased his aid, if he had thought the secret would have been disclosed. Upon the same principle, with all my reverence for the character of Dr. Johnson, I always thought he acted illiberally, if not unjustly, in discovering to Mr. Boswell all the productions which he had written for other persons, for many of which he had actually been paid; and having given the rest, they were no longer his own; for he had suffered them to pass under the names of others, and had therefore no longer any claim to them.



Whether Porson was drunk when I met him on this occasion, or whether he intentionally showed his contempt for the doctor, Mr. Peters, and myself, I know not ; but he did not once join in conversation, and kept playing with a little dog all the time he was present, except when oysters and brandy-and-water were introduced,—then the dog was deserted, and the oysters came into play. When he had finished with these, he resorted to the brandy, and resumed his attention to the dog.

For myself, I did not mind his indifference ; but was shocked to see such contemptuous negligence towards his host, Mr. Peters, and Dr. White, his friends. The dog and the brandy-and-water wholly engrossed his attention. He did not quit the house till a late hour. Dr. White seemed to view the conduct of his friend with composure, as if it was nothing extraordinary, but “his custom ever of an afternoon.” Mr. Peters, on the contrary, justly considered it as rude, contemptuous, and insolent.

I afterward used to meet Porson every night at the Turk’s Head in the Strand, where he retained his devotion to brandy-and-water, and often tired the company with his recital of a burlesque parody of Pope’s exquisite poem of “Eloisa to Abellard.” It was doubted whether this travesty of Pope’s beautiful poem was his own writing, but the warmth and frequency of his obtrusive recitations evidently manifested parental dotage. A limited number of this offensive poem has been lately published at a large price, as if indecency were held rare and valuable. Mr. James Perry, the proprietor of “The Morning Chronicle,” who was reputed to have died worth about 130,000*l.*, was a particular friend of Porson, who, it is supposed, used often to write political articles for him in that paper.

When I first knew Mr. Perry, he lived at a house in the narrow part of Shire-lane, Temple Bar, opposite to the lane which leads to the stairs from Boswell-court. He lodged with Mr. Lunan, a book-binder, who had married his sister. I knew her very well. She was a mild, amiable, and agreeable woman. When her brother left Shire-lane, and took chambers in Clement’s Inn, she went to apartments in George-street, York Buildings, where I occasionally called on her ; and as she lived single, I concluded that Mr. Lunan was dead, or, not succeeding in business, had gone abroad ; but I did not inquire.

A few years after, I saw the newspapers announce the marriage of Professor Porson with this lady, who I therefore naturally concluded had become a widow. Not long after, as I was coming over Westminster Bridge, I was saluted by Mr. Lunan, the former husband of this lady. After the usual courtesy I said, “How is this, my friend ?—why I saw lately in the newspaper that your wife is married to Professor Porson, and if I had met you at twelve at night instead of twelve at noon, I must have taken you for a ghost.” It was true, he said, that Porson had married his wife ; and that he had also been married again several years. I inquired no farther, but parted with him in Hungerford Market, where he appeared to reside. I con-

cluded that as they were both born in Scotland, some ceremony had passed between them in that country which they did not think binding in this; not that they had acted upon the principle of Archer in the play:—

Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee,  
Consent is law enough to set you free.

I never saw Porson or the lady after this extraordinary marriage; but I remember her with respect, and think she was thrown away, as she was a very amiable woman, upon such a sybarite.

Perry had the assistance of Mr. Grey, a learned, sensible man, and an able writer, in the conduct of "The Morning Chronicle." Grey, according to report, had a right to half the property of the paper while he lived, and his share was subject to a provision for his sisters in case of his death. Perry had afterward the powerful support of a gentleman of great literary talent, who had also a part of the property of the paper, but resigned it for a compensation, and is now in high reputation at the bar. It is not understood that Mr. Perry wrote much in the paper himself, but, mixing with the whig party, as they styled themselves, at Debrett's, he obtained all the intelligence they could afford him, as well as many able productions from the literary members of that party. Whatever were his qualities as a writer or a man, he had at least the merit of political consistency. He was once committed to Newgate for having inserted a libel in his paper on government. He published a well-written defence, the materials of which, according to report, were suggested by Lord Erskine.

---

## CHAPTER XX.

MR. SAMUEL IRELAND. I became acquainted with this gentleman at the time when he produced the mass of papers, letters, dramas, &c. which he published upon the information of his son, who represented them as the genuine relics of Shakspeare, chiefly in the handwriting of the great poet. I was invited as one of a committee to examine all the documents, and to decide upon the question of their authenticity. As I was not conversant with old papers, I did not attend the meeting with any intention of joining in the decision, but to see the various articles that were brought forward as once the property of Shakspeare. After the company, consisting of many very respectable and intelligent characters, had looked at all the books which were said to have actually formed a portion of Shakspeare's library, as well as other matters, they waited for young Mr. Ireland, who had promised to develop the source of these valuable relics. At length he appeared, and after some private conversation between



him and Mr. Albany Wallace, an eminent solicitor at that time, the latter addressed the company, and told them that Mr. Ireland, junior, had not been authorized by the person from whom he had derived the matters in question, but that at a future meeting a full explanation should be given. Whether that meeting was ever convened I know not, but I remember that the previous meeting did not break up without manifest tokens of discontent on the part of several of the members.

During the time that this subject engrossed public attention, and it was understood that Shakspeare's manuscript play was to be represented, the elder Mr. Ireland invited the late John Gifford, Esq., the author of "The Life of Mr. Pitt," of "Letters to Lord Lauderdale," "The History of France," and many other works, a gentleman of the bar, and myself, to hear the tragedy of "Vortigern and Rowena" read by him, that we might form some judgment as to its merits and authenticity. Among the imputed relics of the bard there was an old-fashioned long-backed chair on which the arms of Shakspeare were embossed. The chair, though antique in its form, was in perfect preservation. Tea was soon despatched, and the reading was about to commence, when I requested to sit in Shakspeare's chair, as it might contain some inspiring power to enlighten my understanding, and enable me the better to judge. They laughed at my whim, but indulged me with the chair. During the reading there appeared to be passages of great poetical merit, and of an original cast, but occasionally some very quaint expressions, upon which Mr. Gifford commented as often as they occurred. Mr. Ireland observed, that it was of course the language of the time, and that many of the words which were then probably familiar and expressive, had become obsolete. One passage, however, Mr. Ireland admitted to be so quaint and unintelligible, that it would not be suitable to the modern stage. He then referred to Mr. Gifford and the barrister, and asked them if they could suggest any alteration or remoulding of the passage; and when they declined to propose any thing, he asked me if I could suggest any modification of it. At this question I affected to start, and said, "God bless me, shall I sit in Shakspeare's chair, and presume to think I can improve any work from his unrivalled muse?" Mr. Ireland then calmly doubled down the page, observing that he was going into the country, and should have leisure to make any alteration. This observation first induced me to suspect that he was actually concerned in devising what was afterward acknowledged to be a mere fabrication. Yet on a full consideration, I am inclined to think that Mr. Ireland really confided in the story of his son, and relied on the authenticity of all the imputed materials.

I was present at the representation of the tragedy, and perhaps a more crowded theatre was never seen. Mr. Ireland and his family occupied a conspicuous station in the front boxes. The play was patiently heard for some time, but at last the disapprobation of the audience assumed every vociferous mode of hostility, together with the more hopeless annoyance of laughter and derision. Mr. Ireland

bore the storm for some time with great fortitude, but at last he and his family suddenly withdrew from the theatre, and the play ended in the tumult.

The elder Mr. Ireland afterward published all these presumed documents in a large and expensive form, and in a well-written volume defended himself against the attacks of Mr. Malone. Mr. Malone had given him an advantage in refusing to look at these alleged remains of our great bard, and Mr. Isaac Reed also declined to inspect them. As I respect the memory of both these gentlemen, I cannot but think that they displayed some degree of prejudice on the occasion. Mr. Malone, in particular, however well founded his doubts and suspicions might be, could only depend on rumour as to their nature and the quality of the materials. Yet he wrote a large volume on the subject, though his objections must necessarily have been chiefly conjectural. He was ably answered by my late friend Mr. George Chalmers, not that he believed in the authenticity, but to show that the believers had grounds to justify their opinions. He published a second volume on the same subject, which displayed great labour, assiduity, and perseverance, and brought forward many anecdotes and illustrations of our poetical history.

It is well known that Dr. Parr was at first a sincere believer in the authenticity of these documents, and that Mr. Boswell went upon his knees, kissed the imputed relics, and expressed great delight that he had lived to see such valuable documents brought to light. It certainly was a bold attempt on the part of the fabricator to bring forward such a mass of surreptitious productions, but the variety proved that he possessed talents and great ingenuity, as well as industry, for they must have taken up much time and labour in the composition. It is said that he at last acknowledged the whole to be a deception.

I met him one night at the theatre, and to show me with what facility he could copy the signatures of Shakspeare, of which there are but two extant, and they differ from each other, he took a pencil and a piece of paper from his pocket, and wrote both of them with as much speed and exactness as if he had been writing his own name. He gave the paper to me; I compared the signatures with the printed autographs of the poet, and could not but be surprised at the accuracy.

The elder Mr. Ireland must have been mad to incur so great an expense in preparing and printing these documents, if he was conscious of the deception; but I am still disposed to believe that he thought them genuine, notwithstanding the ease with which I have mentioned his avowed intention to alter the text of Shakspeare. Before this transaction took place, he was a remarkably healthy-looking man, with a florid complexion, and stout in his form; but afterward he was so reduced in his body, and seemed to be so dejected in spirit, that I naturally inferred the disappointment, expense, and critical hostility which he had suffered, had made a powerful impression on his mind. He did not long survive this extraordinary attempt to delude the public.



**MR. JOHN IRELAND.** This person, who has often been confounded with the other, I knew very well. He was a watchmaker, and lived many years practising that business in Maiden-lane, Covent Garden. He was the intimate friend of Mr. Henderson, the actor, but pecuniary matters, which have often destroyed friendship, separated these once intimate associates. It was reported at the time, that when Henderson by prudence had realized 600*l.*, Mr. Ireland advised him to embark it in his business, from which he said he could derive more advantage than by investing it in the funds. Henderson consented; but Ireland being a literary man, and finding employment among the booksellers, and preferring literature to trade, neglected his business, and, I believe, became a bankrupt. Henderson consequently lost his money. He deeply resented this failure, as the money was the first-fruits of his theatrical career. He never forgave Ireland, and Jessé Foot told me that he had in vain attempted to bring them together again, and Mr. Foot reviled the memory of Henderson for his obduracy. On the other hand, the late Mr. William Cooke, who was a friend of Henderson and a severe economist, bitterly arraigned the memory of Ireland, whom he accused of deliberate treachery towards Henderson.

I really believe, from what I know of Ireland, that when he took the money he had no ill intention, but his literary pursuits led him to neglect his business, and misfortune was the consequence. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Hogarth, and was employed to illustrate the works of that admirable artist. He made discoveries of works not known to have been Hogarth's till they were proved so by his assiduity. He was a connoisseur in prints and works of art, and full of anecdotes relating to contemporary artists. On the death of Henderson he published a life of his old friend, and endeavoured by a warm tribute to his talents to compensate for the injury which he had done to his fortune.

After his failure he never resumed his business, but devoted himself to the service of the booksellers. I used to call on him at a small house which he occupied in Poet's Corner, near Westminster Abbey, and to meet him among the set who, with Porson and Perry, generally assembled in the evening at the Turk's Head Coffee-house, in the Strand. He was slender and delicate in his person, and placid and agreeable in his manners. I never heard when he died. He was patronised by the Boydells, and the late Mr. George Nicol.

There was one very extraordinary character who used to join the literary and social set at the Turk's Head Coffee-house, whose name was Hewardine. He was a good-looking young man, and his spirits were inexhaustible. To use an expression of Dr. Johnson, he "hung loose upon the town." Nobody knew how he lived, but at last there was some reason to believe that he derived his support from a member of parliament, who was very rich in mining property, and who supported him as kings formerly supported jesters, to entertain themselves and their company. It did not appear that Hewardine had any classical attainments, but he certainly possessed talents,

though they took a strange direction. As far as I could venture to form an opinion of a language which I never studied, he was the most perfect master of what is called slang that I ever knew. Slang is a metaphorical and figurative language, and he who is not the mere channel of it must be possessed of fancy and humour.

There is great ingenuity shown in giving a novel cast to the recital of ordinary occurrences, or to answers in a dialogue. This ingenuity was peculiarly manifested in all that Hewardine said. I wish I could give a specimen of his skill in this respect; but so many years have passed since I knew him, that even were I conversant with the language in question, I should do injustice to his imagination. I remember that he was a formidable opponent in sallies of humour, and have seen Porson, and some of the most ready and intelligent of the company, shrink from his attacks. I took care never to enter into a contest with him, but was always attentive to the exuberance of his humour and the singularity of his expressions.

I was once invited to dine in company with him at a friend's in the Temple, under a notion too favourable to me, as it was expected that some entertainment might arise from a sportive hostility between us. I was aware of the expectation, but knew better than to hazard the encounter, because I could not oppose him with equal weapons. I therefore considered by what means I should avoid the contest, and thought the best way would be to praise him for his power of adapting his conversation to the peculiar turn of those with whom he generally associated, and of rising to the level of nobler companions. I recorded his triumphs at the coffee-house, where no serious conversation was expected, and if introduced, would only lead to banter and ridicule; and expressed my satisfaction that I now found him among gentlemen of the bar, and two or three members of the church, so that he had an opportunity of calling forth his best powers and attainments, and doing justice to his character, without unworthy condescensions to persons of different and inferior habits. This artifice of mine, which was merely designed for self-defence, was attended with success. He felt that he was in company where ribaldry, buffoonery, and something worse would be quite unseasonable. The result was, that though he was more dull than ever I had seen him before, he was more decorous, conversation in general had fair play, and the company were more gratified and amused than they could have been by the wild sallies of his humorous eccentricity, which, perhaps, few in the room would have understood or have been likely to relish.

Even Hewardine seemed to entertain a higher opinion of himself when he found that he was treated with attention by gentlemen of talents, learning, and character, without the necessity of resorting to degrading excesses. He seemed to be one of those careless characters, who, as Hotspur says, "doff the world and bid it pass;" or, as Dr. Johnson says of the famous Tom Brown, who sacrificed good talents for the reputation of being a good fellow.

Hewardine, I am persuaded, possessed a kind and good heart, but



he could not deny himself the triumph of running down a simpleton, and never seemed to consider that, as Thomson says—

“Poor is the triumph o’er the timid hare.”

He was, as I have said, a good-looking man. He had regular features, which were capable of animated expression. The last time I met him was in the morning, at Charing Cross. Though in the meridian of life, he spoke with a tremulous accent, and an evident appearance of a nervous frame. He complained of being chilly, and from his habits I have no doubt that he went to the first shop which afforded a dram after we parted. He published a small volume of poems, chiefly songs, of a very gay and licentious description, as far as I recollect. When or where he died I never knew, but I remember him with a kind concern, fully convinced that if he had been brought properly forward in public life, with the advantage of a good education and regular connexions, he would not have submitted to be a degrading dependant upon any man who did not employ his wealth in protecting and encouraging talents, but in fostering licentious merriment and gross buffoonery.

CERVETTO. This celebrated musician was a performer in the orchestra of Drury-lane Theatre in the days of Garrick. He was esteemed a first-rate performer on the violoncello. The nose being a prominent feature in his face, it gave occasion to the cry of “Nosey,” which was not only prevalent in the upper gallery during his continuance in the orchestra, but was traditional after he left it, and is still often heard. He was a high-spirited man, but of a quiet and affable disposition. The following anecdote I had from his son, a gentleman now alive, though advanced in years, who inherits the professional skill and benevolent disposition of his father.

The elder Cervetto, during his performance in the band, was struck by an apple thrown at him from the upper gallery. He immediately took one of the sentinels who attended the theatre, and proceeded with him to the upper gallery, where, having had the offender pointed out, he seized him by the collar, and took him to the public-office in Bow-street, where he was convicted of the assault, and ordered into confinement for a few days. Cervetto, who was a very humane character, the next day, or the day after, reflecting that the man might have been drunk, or among some mischievous persons, and tempted into the wanton act, was so uneasy, that he went to Sir John Fielding, who then presided at the police-office, solicited and obtained the man’s discharge, paid his fees, and gave him some money for the loss of time and labour which the imprisonment had occasioned, as he appeared to be one of the lower order of artisans. In a few months after, his health appearing to decline, Mr. Cervetto was advised to ride on horseback for a few hours every day. In pursuance of this advice he mounted his horse, and was, unluckily, in crossing Oxford-street, involved in the crowd that accompanied the cart in

which culprits were then conveyed to be executed at Tyburn. On turning his head to look on the unfortunate malefactor, who was the only prisoner, he recognised the man who had assaulted him at the theatre; and the man, to show that he also recognised Cervetto, made a motion, as well as his pinioned state would allow him, to indicate that he recollected him as "Nosey." This hardened indifference, or rather insult, of the culprit, to one who had treated him so kindly, at such an awful moment, had such an effect upon Mr. Cervetto, that it put an end to his morning exercise, and sent him home indisposed for the day.

A ludicrous occurrence happened one night at Drury-lane theatre, when Mr. Garrick was performing "Sir John Brute," in that scene where the knight in a drunken state was gradually falling asleep, and uttering incoherent interjections. Cervetto, partly affected by the excellence of the acting, and partly by the drowsy influence of the sleeping knight, gave a loud yawn, which excited universal laughter, and wholly destroyed the effect of the scene. When the play was over, Garrick sent for Cervetto while he was undressing, and, with perfect good-humour, mildly expostulated with him for having interrupted what he considered his best scene. Cervetto apologized in the best manner which his broken English would allow, assuring the great actor that it was not in his power to prevent yawning when he was particularly pleased,—which his son, who told me both of these anecdotes, assured me was always the case. Mr. Garrick received this apology with great good-humour, and not without some degree of satisfaction.

Another time a respectable-looking man took his station immediately behind Cervetto, and while he was performing in the orchestra, whispered "Nosey." Cervetto turned and merely looked at him, without expressing any anger. In a few minutes the same person repeated "Nosey." Cervetto then turned round, and, with a smile, said, "Sir, you seem to have mistaken your place; you should be there," pointing to the upper gallery. The word "Nosey," as I have said, is still called out in the upper gallery, though the persons who bawl it know nothing of its origin, and it will probably be continued in such places with "God save the King," "Rule Britannia," and "Roast Beef," &c. &c.

Cervetto, the son, told me that he was once very much amused on going into a theatre at Nottingham with a friend, at hearing "Nosey" vociferated among the vulgar part of the audience with as much vehemence as in the metropolis, though it was hardly possible that they could annex any meaning to the word.—Touching upon the theatre, I may venture to mention a green-room anecdote. Before I was permitted to visit the theatre alone, there was an actor of some merit, named Palmer: He is mentioned in Churchill's "Rosciad" with some civility as a comic actor. He married the daughter of the celebrated Mrs. Pritchard, who had left the stage long before my time. Being an actor of repute when the late John Palmer, who afterward became deservedly celebrated, commenced his theatrical career, the latter was



styled on the playbills, Mr. *I. Palmer*. An actor, who had left the green-room after a rehearsal, meeting a person in the street, was asked if any thing had occurred at the theatre—"Yes," said the actor; "and what you will deem melancholy news; one Palmer is dead, and another has had an eye knocked out." It may be proper to add that the initial "I" to the name of John Palmer had been immediately omitted in the play-bills on the death of his namesake, because he was then the only Mr. Palmer.

JERVAS, the painter. This artist, the friend and favourite painter of Pope, who received instructions from him at a time when the poet was intimate with Sir Godfrey Kneller (who doubtless would have been proud of such a pupil), was but an indifferent artist, and totally unworthy of the poet's high panegyrics on his professional skill. Mr. Northcote, who was a domestic pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and lived many years in the same house, told me that one day after dinner the name of Jervas was mentioned, when Mr. Northcote expressed his surprise that reading the high encomiums of Pope, he had never seen a picture by Jervas. Miss Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, and a good artist herself, to whom the observation was addressed, concurred in the same surprise, never having seen one. She then addressed Sir Joshua, who was deaf, and raising her voice, asked him what was the reason that no pictures of Jervas were to be seen. "Because," said Sir Joshua, "they are all in the garrets." It is certain that Pope, though very fond of painting, had little knowledge of the art, and praised Jervas with the zeal of a friend rather than with the judgment of a critic. It would now probably be impossible to find a picture of the painter whose name the poet has immortalized. It is somewhat strange that Mr. Northcote had never heard of Howard, a painter, immortalized by Prior, the poet.

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

OZIAS HUMPHREY, R. A. I was very intimate with this artist in the latter part of his life. He was an admirable miniature painter, and he and Mr. Cosway at one time divided the patronage of the public in that province of art. Humphrey, however, was more ambitious than his rival, and soared into competition with Sir Joshua Reynolds. For this purpose he went to Italy to study the works of the great masters in that emporium of genius and taste. On his return to this country, he discovered that the ground was occupied by men of talents who had during his absence started forward, and that the fame of Reynolds had too widely spread, and was too deeply rooted, to admit of successful rivalry. He was too proud to return to the sphere of miniature; and in that province of art also many men of genius had arisen. While Cosway was triumphant in the patronage of the fash-

ionable world, Humphrey had in some degree been forgotten during his absence, and therefore thought the wisest course he could adopt was to go to India; and as he was well connected, he readily obtained permission from the East India Company. His talents soon made him known, and he was generally patronised, but being too eager to obtain a fortune and return to this country, he was much too high in his charges, and as there were other artists at Calcutta, his business declined. The nabobs of Oude and of Arcot were deeply indebted to him, but not being sufficiently employed, he left India, and his claims upon those oriental potentates remained unsettled. His agents, with great assiduity, ultimately obtained some portion, though but a small one, of the Indian debts.

On his return to London, finding all other provinces of art fully occupied, he turned his attention to crayon painting, and produced some beautiful works. But here again his business declined, when he found it expedient to quit his expensive apartments in Bond-street, and to take lodgings at Knightsbridge. He was then attacked by a disorder in his eyes, but, instead of resorting to an eminent practitioner, he put himself under the care of an old woman, who had obtained some reputation among ignorant and credulous people, and under her management his sight gradually declined, until he was at length obliged to abandon his profession.

What property he had acquired was not known, but it was supposed to be very scanty; yet he used to invite his friends to dine with him, and often promised, if I would come, that he would give me "a beefsteak and a mackerel." I, however, never profited by his hospitality, though his conversation would have been the best part of the feast. Being in the habit of promising his friends "a beefsteak and a mackerel," when mackerel had been long out of season, a waggish friend advised him to change the fish. He, however, dropped the fish altogether, and confined himself to the steak. He was invited so much abroad that it is probable he had seldom, if ever, an opportunity of entertaining a friend at his own table.

On his return from India he was very anxious to become a royal academician; and, as many of the members of this admirable institution were his friends, he easily obtained that honour. We had dined together at Mr. Opie's, in Berners-street. Opie, in the evening, went to vote for him at the Royal Academy, and during his absence Humphrey was in great anxiety for the result; and when Opie returned with the news of his success, he rubbed his hands with ecstasy, as if he had obtained a great acquisition of wealth.

Though intelligent and well acquainted with the world, he was a little too fond of interlarding his conversation with accounts of his connexion with nobility, and seemed to think nothing worth recording that was of plebeian origin. He was also lofty in his description of his state in India, and used to say, that when he was at leisure he called for his elephant and took a morning ride. Opie, who possessed great humour, and was fond of alliteration, in imitation of Humphrey's manner, used to say, that if he went to India he should ring for his



rhinoceros, trot with his *tiger*, prance on his *panther*, canter with his camel, or dash off on his *dromedary*.

Humphrey was fond of raillery, and if I may provoke my reader with a pun, I will mention that one day, when a little sportive contest took place between him and me, he said, "Taylor, you are an *every-day man*."—"Very well," said I, "and you are a *weak one*." I must not insult my reader by suggesting the proper orthography of my pun, but trifling as it was, it excited a laugh, and put an end to the facetious hostility of my friendly opponent.

On the death of Humphrey, I received a visit from his nephew to announce the melancholy intelligence. He told me that his uncle had retained his mental faculties to the last, and was fully aware that his death was approaching. A few moments before he died he said to his nephew, "As soon as I am dead, go to Jack Taylor, at the Sun office in the Strand, and he will not let me drop into the grave without saying something kind of my memory." I complied with his wish, and inserted a tribute of respect for his character in "The Sun" newspaper, which seemed to be satisfactory to his relatives. Humphrey was generous when in prosperous circumstances, and gave Spicer, an enamel painter, fifty guineas for an enamel copy of his own portrait of the Duke of Richmond.

MR. CALEB WHITEFOORD. I am induced to mention this gentleman at present, because a similar circumstance attended his departure from this world. Mr. Whitefoord was a gentleman distinguished for his wit, learning, and taste in the fine arts. I never knew a person more ready at a repartee. He was in partnership with Mr. Brown, a wine-merchant, but being of a good family, he left the management of the concern almost wholly to Brown, and, like Congreve, who, when visited by Voltaire, wished not to be considered an author but a private gentleman, so Mr. Whitefoord wished to be regarded not as connected with the wine-trade, but as a gentleman and a diplomatist, having been attached to Lord St. Helen's when he went to adjust the preliminaries of peace with the French government.

Mr. Whitefoord had a literary turn, which he frequently indulged in "The Public Advertiser," the most popular and respectable diurnal newspaper of the time. He was the author of "cross-readings," which consisted not of reading down each column, but across the whole columns of each side of a newspaper, and which mode brought forth many whimsical and facetious juxtapositions. He also wrote a sportive essay, entitled "Errors of the Press," and a series of lively political articles in "The Public Advertiser," entitled "Ship News." He is mentioned in a very favourable manner by Goldsmith in his poem of "Retaliation," not without a suspicion that he wrote the lines himself after the death of the poet, and induced the printer to introduce them in a second edition of the poem as Goldsmith's production. But as he really deserved the character given of him, and was not of an artful turn of mind, I presume to think that they were a genuine tribute of Goldsmith to the merit of his friend.

Mr. Whitefoord claimed the letter signed "Junia" in "The Public

Advertiser," which was answered by "Junius" himself, with such indelicate allusions, that he repented having written it, and desired Mr. Woodfall to disown it as the real production of that great political writer.

Mr. Whitefoord's partner had partly rebuilt their house of business in the Adelphi, which was so situated as to afford no sight of the Thames, and had placed a balcony in front. He asked Mr. Whitefoord what he thought of the house. "Why, it is a very good one," said he, "and your balcony is the most disinterested one I ever saw."—"Why do you call it disinterested?" said Brown. "Why?" rejoined Whitefoord, "because you can have *no view* in it."

Mr. Whitefoord used to tell many whimsical anecdotes, among which was the following. George Bodens, a well-known character of the time, was enormously bulky, and on leaving one of the clubs in St. James's-street, he had called a sedan-chair, and just as he was entering it, a nobleman who was getting into his carriage, seeing him, called to him, and said he would give him a cast home. Bodens then left the chair, and gave the chairman a shilling. "What! no more, your honour?" said the chairman. "Why," said Bodens, "I did not enter your chair." "Ah! but consider the fright, please your honour," rejoined the man; and Bodens, though poor himself, gave him another shilling for his humour.

Mr. Whitefoord, being a wit himself, naturally became acquainted with the chief wits of his time, and with many much older than himself. He told me stories of Colley Cibber, Quin, and other celebrated characters, which, never thinking I should have occasion to record them, have escaped my memory. I remember his telling me that Colley was particularly severe upon the actors who came forward after he left the stage, and especially on Garrick; and Mr. Whitefoord added, it appeared to him that Colley Cibber's high panegyrics on actors of his own time were not without a view to degrade those of the succeeding period. This allusion, however, could not apply to Garrick, as Cibber's *Apology* was published in 1739, and Garrick did not appear in London till two years after.

Mr. Whitefoord once asked him, as he had been a prolific dramatic writer, if he had not some manuscript plays by him that were deserving of public notice. "To be sure I have," said he, "but who are now alive to act them?"

Now I am upon COLLEY CIBBER, I may as well pause upon Mr. Whitefoord, and tell all I have heard of Cibber. The late Mr. Arthur Murphy, speaking of Colley, told me that he once dined with him at Mrs. Woffington's, when he spoke with great contempt of Garrick; and she having said, "Come now, Colley, you must acknowledge he is a very clever young man;" his answer was, "He is very well in *Fribble*;" and on further urging him, he said, "he does not play Bayes so well as my son." But at last, when Murphy joined with the lady in high eulogiums on Garrick, comparing his animated representations of life, and diversities of character, with the stately pomposity of Quin, he was induced to admit that Garrick was an extraordinary young man.



In the course of the evening, Cibber was earnestly entreated to repeat some passage from any character he had performed; and after much importunity, he said, "Well, you jade, if you will assist my memory, I will give you the first speech of Sir John Brute." He then delivered the speech with little assistance from the lady, in the most masterly manner, as Mr. Murphy assured me; and when he had praised the good qualities of Lady Brute, closing with "But here she comes," his expression of disgust was more strikingly characteristic of a surfeited husband than any thing of a similar nature he had ever witnessed on the stage.

Mr. Murphy told me also, that he was once present at Tom's Coffee-house, in Russell-street, Covent Garden, which was only open to subscribers, when Colley was engaged at whist, and an old general was his partner. As the cards were dealt to him, he took up every one in turn, and expressed his disappointment at every indifferent one. In the progress of the game he did not follow suit, and his partner said, "What! have you not a spade, Mr. Cibber?" The latter, looking at his cards, answered, "Oh, yes, a thousand;" which drew a very peevish comment from the general. On which Cibber, who was shockingly addicted to swearing, replied, "Don't be angry, for ——— I can play ten times worse if I like."

By all accounts, Cibber had more inexhaustible gayety in his mind and manner than his contemporaries had known of any other character. This peculiar turn of mind is evident in his dedication to his "Apology," in the work itself, and in his letters inserted in the "Correspondence of Richardson, the author of 'Clarissa,' 'Sir Charles Grandison,' &c." The name of the person to whom the dedication to the "Apology" was addressed is not mentioned, but the late Mr. John Kenble assured me that he had authority for saying it was Mr. Pelham, brother to the Duke of Newcastle.

Colley Cibber lived in Berkeley-square, at the north corner of Bruton-street, where my mother told me she saw him once standing at the parlour window, drumming with his hands on the frame. She said that he appeared like a calm, grave, and reverend old gentleman. With all our admiration of the poetical and moral character of Pope, it must be acknowledged that he absurdly as well as cruelly persecuted Cibber; but the latter well revenged himself in two well-known letters published against "the wicked wasp of Twickenham," as Pope was styled at the time; and the younger Richardson, who was present when Pope was reading one of them, has recorded their effects on the irritable temper of the bard.

I have too long forgotten my friend Mr. Whitefoord, of whom, however, I have little more to say. He called on me one morning, apparently full of some interesting information, while I was proprietor and conductor of "The Sun," and desiring me to take up my pen, bade me write as follows:—"Birth. On the — inst. the lady of Caleb Whitefoord, Esq., at his house in Argyle-street, of *twins*;" and he uttered the last word with such a triumphant shout as might almost have been heard in the street. He had a good collection of pictures,

and was a judicious critic. He presented me with a small picture of David and Bathsheba, of no great merit, but which he ascribed to Luca Jordano. He was much respected for probity, as well as for his wit and scholarship. He was taken ill of a fever, which alarmed his family, and it was thought proper to send for his solicitor, Mr. James Seaton, one of his old friends, and that gentleman called on me to say that Mr. Whitefoord desired to see me. He was in bed, and manifested his usual good-humour when I entered his room.

Mr. Seaton met me by appointment soon after, and that gentleman in the most delicate manner hinted to him in my presence that, as there was at his time of life some danger that his illness might not have a favourable termination, it would be proper for him to make a will for the security of his wife and family. He did not seem alarmed, but said "With all my heart." Mr. Seaton was then provided with a paper for instructions, and Mr. Whitefoord remained silent. Mr. Seaton then asked what property he thought he possessed. Mr. Whitefoord still remained silent. At length Mr. Seaton said, "Shall I say 20,000l.?" and his answer was, "I hope so." The will was then arranged, and two or three persons were proposed to Mr. Whitefoord as executors, but he gave satisfactory reasons for rejecting them, and proved that his faculties were by no means impaired. At last Mr. George Nicol, the eminent bookseller of Pall Mall, another friend, a respectable dealer in pictures, and myself, were appointed executors. Mr. Nicol, who was a man of business, and universally esteemed for kindness and probity, took the whole burden upon himself, and discharged the duties of his trust with great zeal, assiduity, and friendship, calling on his coadjutors only when it was necessary to apply their signature to official documents. Mr. Whitefoord died, as far as I recollect, the following day, and I attended his funeral in Paddington church. He was much regretted by his friends for the kindness of his disposition, his humanity, knowledge, and facetious fertility. He was an excellent judge of acting, and an enthusiastic admirer of Garrick. His pictures were numerous and well selected, and among them were many by Sir Joshua Reynolds. He was very fond of music, with which he was reputed to be scientifically conversant, and was in all respects a man of taste and worth.

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

MRS. CORNELYS. My family, in my boyhood, were well acquainted with this extraordinary woman, who once made a distinguished figure in the regions of fashion. Her mansion in Soho-square, which she styled Carlisle House, was admirably arranged for concerts, balls, masquerades, &c., and was peculiarly appropriate for the assemblage of the higher order of visitors. Her house was patronised by some of



the chief nobility for many years, till the appearance of the Pantheon, in Oxford-street, a structure of the most beautiful and elegant description, the architectural triumph of the late Mr. James Wyat.

The magnificent edifice of the Pantheon, supported by patrons of the higher order, gave a fatal blow to Carlisle House, the attraction of which gradually declined, till Mrs. Cornelys was at last obliged to relinquish her establishment, and sunk by degrees, till she ultimately became an inhabitant of the Fleet prison for debt, and I believe remained there some years. Before she came to England, she had been a public singer in Germany, of which she was a native. She brought to this country a son and daughter, to whom she gave a good education. The son, who was a very amiable and accomplished young man, after his mother's fall, assumed the name of Altorf, and for some years was the tutor of the late Earl of Pomfret, who has several times told me that he held him in esteem for his talents, attainments, and moral character. He went abroad after he left Lord Pomfret, and I never heard what became of him; but from what I knew of him, I doubt not that his talents and character enabled him to support himself respectably.

His sister was of a different description, and is less entitled to a respectful notice in this work. She was the only daughter of Mrs. Cornelys, and he was the only son. What were their ages when their mother first brought them to this country, I know not. She must have arrived in my infancy, as she kept a carriage and a country-house at Hammersmith long before our family were acquainted with her. I never heard where the son was educated, but probably in his earlier years abroad, as he retained a foreign accent, though in full possession of the English language.

The daughter was placed in a Roman Catholic seminary at Hammersmith, generally known by the name of "The Nunnery," which it still bears. Sophy Cornelys was brought from that place when she was about fifteen years of age, and resided with her mother either at Carlisle House, or at her seat at Hammersmith. She had cultivated her musical talents with success, and performed very well upon the piano-forte, the harp, and the common guitar. She had a fine voice, and sang with great taste and expression. After her mother's fall, she began to think the connexion not very creditable to her; and when she once visited her mother in the Fleet, told her that she was sure she was not her daughter, but of noble origin in Germany, and desired to know who really were her parents. It was in vain that the mother, depressed with misfortune, and shocked at such an unnatural application, with tears in her eyes assured her that her suspicion was wholly unfounded. Sophy resolved to believe the contrary, and, I fear, deserted her unhappy parent. Finding it expedient to give herself a noble extraction, she reported that she was a natural daughter of Prince Charles of Lorraine by a lady of quality, and was base enough to insinuate that Mrs. Cornelys wanted to sacrifice her to Lord Pigot, who lived in Soho-square, and was a patron of her mother; though the mother, knowing that Lord Pigot was a

man of gallantry, actually sent her daughter to a convent abroad, that she might be out of the way of temptation. It is proper to add, that I have no reason to believe she ever, to use the words of Pope, "broke Diana's law."

For some time the present Mr. Charles Butler, well known for his legal knowledge, his attachment to the Roman Catholic religion, his literary talents, and the benevolence of his disposition, allowed her a provision, which enabled her to take apartments near Bedford-row, Bloomsbury. He had known her in her prosperity, was fond of music, and admired her talents. I remember to have heard her sing an air, the words and music of which were composed by that gentleman, of which I reminded him many years afterward, when I had the pleasure of meeting him at the late Dr. Kitchener's.

During many months, while Sophy Cornelys was endeavouring to procure a situation as teacher to young ladies in a private family, for which she was well qualified by her musical talents, and her knowledge of the French and Italian languages, it was her custom to come after breakfast to our house in Hatton Garden, where she continued the remainder of the day, and I always escorted her home at night. She was a very agreeable companion, and by her talents well rewarded my parents and the family for the humble protection which she received. At length Lady Harrington, the mother of the late earl, took her into her mansion at the Stable Yard, St. James's, and treated her with great kindness. She afterward resided with her former pupil, the Duchess of Newcastle, when her grace was Lady Anna Maria Stanhope, one of the beautiful daughters of Lady Harrington.

I was once introduced to the late Lord Harrington by his lively and good-humoured son, then Lord Petersham. I mentioned Miss Cornelys to Lord Harrington, who was glad to be reminded of one of the companions of his youth, and desirous of knowing what had become of her. Old Lady Harrington was very fond of music, and styled Miss Cornelys' voice a "moonlight voice," which, strange as the epithet may appear, was not inappropriate, as it had a soft, calm, plaintive sound, which, like the "sweet echo" of the lady in *Comus*, was more suited to the stillness of night than "to the garish eye of day."

The next remove of Miss Cornelys was to the protection of old Lady Spencer, who left her a hundred pounds a year at her death. She had resided with the Duchess of Newcastle in Lincolnshire, and with Lady Spencer at Richmond. On the death of the latter, she returned to town, and renewed her acquaintance with some of her earlier friends, but being introduced to the present Princess Augusta, she gradually dropped all intercourse with her old connexions, and even denied that she ever knew them. I forgot to mention in the proper place, that on the fall of her mother, she was anxious not to be known as Miss Cornelys; and one night when a knock was heard at our street-door, to quiet her fears lest a stranger should hear her name, she begged that I would go to the door myself and prevent



intrusion. The person who knocked happened to be an inquisitive little friend, who was too intimate with the family to be excluded; and asking who was in the parlour, a common name occurred to me, and I told him a Miss Williams. From that time she adopted this name, and retained it amid all her vicissitudes till her death.

She was totally void of sensibility, but affected great feeling. She was kindly harboured some time by Mrs. Mayor, the wife of Mr. Mayor, formerly member of parliament for Abingdon, who was an accomplished lady, and at whose house I was a frequent visitor. One evening when Miss Williams was present, a story of a recent domestic calamity was related, which drew tears from all the company; while Miss Williams forgot herself so much as to continue her needlework with apparent indifference. Mrs. Mayor, observing her so unmoved, could not help expressing her surprise that she should hear so lamentable a story, which had so deeply affected all the company, without emotion. Miss Williams, who then thought it time to "assume a virtue if she had it not," twisted the hair upon her forehead, looked wildly, exclaimed, "Oh! it is too much," and rushed hastily out of the room to give vent to the violence of her sympathy.

At length she withdrew from all intercourse with those who were likely to have known her in early days, and, obtaining the patronage of the present Princess Augusta, was employed by that amiable branch of the royal family in the distribution of her charities, to whom, no doubt, she submitted cases of calamity that never existed, and allotted the bounties to herself. She was so artful, so suspicious, and so unforgiving, that a lady who was also patronised by the same princess for her talents as an artist, and who had painted a portrait of her royal highness, assured me she was obliged to pay the most cautious homage to Miss Williams, lest she should deprive her of the royal patronage.

It may be thought that I am too harsh in describing one of my early connexions; but I feel it to be a moral duty not to suffer artifice, hypocrisy, and ingratitude to put themselves forward as virtuous qualities. Besides, Miss Williams was many years older than I was at the time, and I knew too little of the world to be able to pierce through the veil of practised subtlety and dissimulation which she assumed. Far from regretting that I have thus unmasked an artful hypocrite, who has not left any relations to lament her death, I conceive it but just that I should undeceive those whom her cunning might have ensnared into friendship, and hold out a warning to amiable credulity.

The fate of her mother may excite curiosity, and is not unworthy of notice. She was many years in the Fleet prison after her fall. The friends of her prosperity, as might be supposed, nay, indeed, expected by those who know the world, entirely deserted her, and perhaps she was never visited by her daughter, except upon the impudent pretence of inquiring who were her noble or princely parents. It is not improbable that her son, if then living, was the means of procuring her liberty and affording her subsistence. After many

years, when my late excellent friend Mr. Edward Jerningham, generally styled the poet, was taking me in a carriage to dine with a mutual friend at Hammersmith, we stopped at a house in Knightsbridge, where we alighted, and he introduced me to an old lady, whom I immediately recognised as Mrs. Cornelys. And what, gentle reader, do you suppose was then the calling of this lady, who had formerly been styled "the empress of the regions of elegance and fashion?" That of purveyor of asses' milk.

She had a large brood of the long-eared sisterhood in her service, and despatched them daily to several parts of the town. She was not, however, though far advanced in years, and as might be supposed, subdued by adversity, without a hope that she should possibly regain her influence in the fashionable world; for she aspired to the honour of having a public breakfast, under the patronage of his late majesty, then Prince of Wales, at her humble dwelling, which might be aptly styled Asinine Hall. She seemed delighted at the idea of being re-introduced to any part of a family who had known her in better times. She then took us into the room intended for the morning fête that was to take place under royal patronage. It exhibited a melancholy proof of the total loss of that taste which had produced such a variety of elegant arrangements at Carlisle House; and consisted of a small room ornamented on all sides, as well as on the ceiling, with bits of variously coloured looking-glass.

As Mr. Jerningham, who was intimately connected with people of the highest rank, and had visited Carlisle House in the meridian of its splendour, and as I, when a boy, had been permitted to see it in that state, the change in her situation absolutely depressed our spirits, and our gloom was not dissipated till we partook of the hospitality of the friend whom we were going to visit.

Before we left her, however, Mr. Jerningham, with his usual kindness, had mentioned me to the lady as possessed of literary talents; which induced her to request that I would write an address to the Prince of Wales, soliciting his royal highness to patronise her fête. I complied with her request, and wrote two for the occasion. It will hardly be believed that a young man then attended her daily in the capacity of her secretary, who was to copy the address, and present it in person to the expected royal patron. The princely repast of course never took place; the brood of long-eared nurses fell into other hands, and I never knew what became of this unfortunate victim of fashionable caprice and filial ingratitude.

I may here properly introduce a story which I heard from good authority. The proprietor of the house at Knightsbridge, where Mrs. Cornelys presided over the *milky way*, went abroad as secretary to the governor of one of our West India islands, and took with him his wife and an infant daughter in arms. They stopped on their way at some Roman Catholic settlement, and the lady was taken to a nunnery to drink tea. She took her child with her, and the abbess was so pleased with it that she requested to have it taken to the nuns, that they might see so beautiful an infant. During the time that the child was



absent, the abbess endeavoured to persuade the mother to let it remain in the convent, where it should be well provided for through life. The mother, however, of course declined the proposal, and being alarmed, importunately demanded her child. The abbess and the nuns refused to bring it back, and forced the mother out of the place. The mother then applied to the governor of the settlement, and obtained from him an order to restore her child. The child, which was beautiful and healthy when it entered the convent, was restored to her, but so altered and languid that she scarcely knew it, and it died before the morning. Hence it was inferred that the abbess and the sisterhood deemed it more meritorious to murder the infant than suffer it to be brought up a heretic.

---

### CHAPTER XXIII.

**HAYDN.** The first time that I saw this celebrated composer was at Madame Mara's, in what is now called Foley Place, Marylebone. I had dined there in company with my late friends, Dr. Wolcot and Mr. Crosdill, the most eminent performer on the violoncello that perhaps ever existed. Before the wine was removed, Mr. Salomon, the great violin-player, arrived, and brought Haydn with him. They were both old friends of Madame Mara. Haydn did not know a word of English. As soon as we knew who he was, Crosdill, who was always in high spirits, and an enthusiast for musical talent of all kinds, proposed that we should celebrate the arrival of Haydn with three times three. This proposal was warmly adopted and commenced, all parties but Haydn standing up. He heard his name mentioned, but not understanding this species of congratulation, stared at us with surprise. As soon as the ceremony ended, it was explained to him by Salomon. He was a modest, diffident, and delicate man, and was so confused with this unexpected and novel greeting, that he put his hands before his face and was quite disconcerted for some minutes.

Finding that he was in company with so celebrated a musical performer as Crosdill, and so popular a poet as Peter Pindar, whose fame had reached him in Germany, he felt himself comfortable, and we did not separate till a late hour, to the perfect satisfaction of Madame Mara, who was delighted to see so great a genius as Haydn enjoying the animated character of Crosdill, the sarcastic shrewdness of Salomon, and the whimsical sallies of Peter Pindar. A few months after, when Haydn had acquired some knowledge of the English language, Mr. Salomon invited him, Dr. Wolcot, and myself, to dine at the coffee-house in Vere-street, Oxford-street, in a private room. Salomon, who was a very intelligent man, entertained us with anecdotes of distinguished characters in Germany, and ex-

plained many observations which Haydn made on the works of Handel, Mozart, and other eminent musicians; at length the name of Pleyel was mentioned, and Dr. Wolcot, who was apt to blunder, burst into a rapturous eulogium on the admired concertante of that composer, and on his taste and genius as a musician. The doctor carried his zeal to such an extent, forgetting that there was so great a musical genius in the room, that Haydn at last, readily admitting the merit of Pleyel, could not help adding, a little warmly, "But I hope it will be remembered that he was my pupil." The doctor felt this remark as a rebuke, and attempted a confused apology.

I afterward met Haydn at Mrs. Billington's at Brompton. The party was large. Shield was present; but the room was disgraced by the appearance of a man named Williams, who was *not better* known by the assumed designation of Anthony Pasquin. This man was by no means destitute of talents or humour, but was vain, vulgar, insolent, and overbearing. His works are marked by low malignity. He was the terror of the middling and lower order of actors and artists, and would call on them in a morning, ask them if they dined at home, and finding that they did, would impudently order them to get a particular dish, and sometimes bring an acquaintance with him at the appointed hour. This practice he carried on for many years, almost subsisting upon timid painters and performers, musical and theatrical, who were afraid of his attacks in newspapers, or in his abusive verses.

At the dinner which I have mentioned, he sat opposite to Haydn, whom he suddenly addressed in the following manner. "Mr. Haydn, you are the greatest genius that ever I saw," concluding with a very coarse and violent asseveration. Haydn was confused, and the company shocked, not only by this vulgar salutation, but by the general coarseness and obtrusiveness of his manners.

Hearing that Mr. Shield, Dr. Wolcot, and myself had ordered a coach at night, he watched us, and as we were getting into it, forced himself upon us, alleging that he would pay his portion of the fare. Shield, who was all good-nature and kindness, readily assented, but to the horror of Dr. Wolcot, who with great difficulty concealed the disgust which Pasquin had excited. Willing to have a little harmless mischief in the coach, I jogged Shield, who with all his benevolence was fond of fun. I expressed myself highly gratified in being a fellow-passenger with two men of great genius, who had both distinguished their poetical powers under fictitious appellations, observing how gratifying it would be to the world if they would unite their powers, and publish a work in conjunction, proposing that they should shake hands together to ratify their undertaking. Pasquin immediately stretched forth his hand, and declared that he should feel great pride in such a literary alliance, and attempted to seize the hand of Wolcot, who felt unwilling to offer it, and held it in such a manner as if he feared contagion in the touch. I resumed the subject, and was beginning to predict some admirable production of their united genius, when Wolcot could no longer restrain his feelings, but accused me,



with great warmth, of endeavouring to promote mischief. I appealed to Shield, who enjoyed the joke, whether I had not endeavoured rather to promote harmony between two persons who were before strangers to each other. Finding its effect upon Shield, for whom the doctor had a sincere regard, he began to see that I had nothing but merry mischief in view, and remained silent; still nothing could induce him to turn towards Pasquin, who sat on the same side with him. At length the coach stopped, by order, at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and the moment the man opened the door, Pasquin bolted out and ran towards the Strand. Wolcot, seeing him run off, imitated his example, and ran the contrary way with as little ceremony. I however pursued him, but he took hold of the church rails, laughed heartily, saying, "As soon as I saw Gibbet run, I resolved to follow his example." However, he came back to Shield, and readily paid his portion of the fare, not without some reluctance on the part of Shield, who wanted to consider the coach as wholly his own, particularly as he had suffered Pasquin to enter it. We then concluded a pleasant night together.

Among the theatrical performers upon whom this Anthony Pasquin levied contributions was Mrs. Abington, and as this lady had by no means been a votaress of Diana in the early part of her life, he exercised a double power over her; for if she rejected his applications for pecuniary assistance, he could not only wound her feelings by alluding to scenes which she of course wished to be buried in oblivion, but could bitterly animadvert upon her theatrical exertions while she remained on the stage. Such was her terror of this predatory financier, that she submitted to all his exactions.

My friend William Cooke, the old barrister, who was really her friend, endeavoured to rescue her from this thralldom, but in vain; Pasquin invited himself to dine with her whenever he pleased, and always reversed the usual order of things, by making her pay him for attending her involuntary invitations.

When my late friend William Gifford published a new edition of his "*Bæviad* and *Mæviad*," he alluded in some bitter strictures to Anthony, who brought actions against the author, and a considerable number of booksellers who had sold the work. The chief defendant employed Mr. Garrow as his counsel, and in the defence, that gentleman cited so many infamous passages from Pasquin's works, of an offensive description, that he was nonsuited, and obliged to fly to America to avoid the pressure of the law expenses which he had incurred. In America, he was employed by the proprietor of a newspaper hostile to Cobbett, to attack that writer, but though Anthony had a ready knack at rhyming, he was a bad prose writer, and found Peter Porcupine too formidable an adversary, and the strong pen of that author soon drove him back to England, where he was obliged to live in obscurity for fear of his creditors. He however emerged again, was employed to write for a morning paper, and dragged on a precarious subsistence.

During the time he was in America, there was a report of his death.

Mr. Cooke immediately went to Mrs. Abington and congratulated her on the death of her literary tyrant. Mrs. Abington, who knew the man, and suspected the artifices which he was likely to adopt, far from manifesting the pleasure which Mr. Cooke thought his news was calculated to excite, displayed a painful expression on her features, and earnestly addressing him, said, "Are you sure he is dead?" The event justified her doubt, for after having compromised with his creditors, who wisely reflected on the folly of throwing away money in law upon such a man, they suffered him to subsist upon the depredation of the pen.

His despicable life really ended some years ago at an obscure village not far from London. It was my misfortune to be in early life acquainted with this man, before he was so degraded a character, and he consulted me on the state of his eyes. I lamented the connexion, but bore it with fortitude. I lost his *friendship* unexpectedly. On the day when the late Mr. West, the President of the Royal Academy, first exhibited his large fine picture of Christ Rejected, as I was going to see it I met Pasquin, who was returning from the private view. He told me where he had been, and I asked him what he thought of the picture. He said that there were some beauties and many faults. "Ay," said I, "but you are so kind and liberal-minded that you will take no notice of the latter." He left me abruptly with a frown, and though we often passed each other afterward, he never condescended to notice me again.

Worthless and despicable as this man was, I cannot but condemn the manner in which he had been treated on an occasion which developed his character and doomed him to irremovable disgrace. He had, doubtless, under a consciousness of the terrors of his pen, and the boldness of his arrogance, for he affected the character of a hero, uttered something that disgusted the company at a tavern in Bow-street, Covent Garden, and an apology was demanded on his knees, which he refused to give. He was then assailed by persons of more strength than himself, and so severely beaten, that, partly from weakness and partly from fear, he fell on his knees and uttered all that was required, and then sunk to the ground, in which situation he was kicked in the mouth, and his front teeth, which were fine ones, were driven from their sockets. This treatment was cruelty, not just resentment. It would have been surely sufficient to have pulled the lion's skin from the detected ass.

Having mentioned Mr. West, I must indulge myself in a tribute of respect to him as an old and esteemed friend. I knew him very many years, and often visited him in his painting-room, where I derived much pleasure from his conversation. The Royal Academy used to have a dinner on the anniversary of the birthday of the late Queen Charlotte, and the members had the privilege of introducing a friend. I was the guest of Mr. West on these occasions for many years, and he generally placed me next to himself on his left hand at the cross-table. On one occasion, seeing the late Sir Henry, then Mr. Raeburn, unnoticed at one of the long tables, as I had the pleas-



ure of knowing him, I suggested to Mr. West that the great artist of Edinburgh was present, and that I was sure he would be glad to show Mr. Raeburn a mark of his respect. Mr. West readily adopted the hint, and after a handsome compliment to Mr. Raeburn on his professional merit, invited him to a seat at the cross-table. Mr. Raeburn, who was a very modest and amiable man, was quite confused by this unexpected notice; but, expressing his thanks in a few words, he could not avoid the invitation. When he came to the cross-table, he said with a good-natured reprehension, "You brought all this embarrassment upon me."

While my son was at the high-school at Edinburgh, he received much kind attention from this estimable gentleman, who told me in a letter that he had made a sketch of a young friend for me, and soon after sent to me a finished and beautiful portrait of my son.

I once before had an opportunity of drawing from an obscure situation a gentleman by station and character entitled to public respect. This gentleman was Mr. Jay, the American minister to the British government. I dined on a lord mayor's day at Guildhall, in one of the private rooms, and Mr. Jay was pointed out to me. I thought that from respect to the American government its minister should be more distinguished. I therefore went to the cross-table in the great hall, and in a whisper told Sir John Scott, now the venerable Lord Eldon, whom I had the honour of knowing, the situation of Mr. Jay. Sir John immediately informed the lord mayor, who instantly sent an officer to invite Mr. Jay to the cross-table, where he was received with the distinction due to his character as the American representative. I had not the pleasure of being acquainted with Mr. Jay, and never saw him afterward.

Mr. West was mild and respectful in his manners. He was very susceptible of jocularities, and told a story with humour. In his serious narratives, while he always kept in view the main features, he never lost sight of those particulars which tended to render the subject more perspicuous, or to illustrate the character to which it essentially related. His account of the origin and progress of Washington, which I have heard him more than once relate, was interesting to a very high degree.

As an artist, it would be presumptuous in me to offer my opinion of him, as his works are before the world, and have firmly established his reputation. The vast number of his productions, and the variety of the subjects, demonstrate the force of his mind and the power of his imagination. The extensive collection of his works and their general merit ought to have rendered them a national feature, and it is by no means a credit to the American government that it declined to purchase them in their combined state, as they might have been had for a sum that a government must be supposed well able to afford. Besides, such a collection would not only have been a national school for a rising country, but have been an honour to America, of which the artist was a native.

I am sorry to observe that the hostility towards West and his works,

which appears in the poems of Dr. Wolcot, was not creditable to him, even as a critic, and was evidently the result of his partiality to Opie, not without just grounds of suspicion that he was actuated by interested motives. Mr. West was by no means illiberal in his comments on the works of rival artists, but on the contrary was a warm patron of rising talents. He zealously encouraged the promising talents of the late Mr. Harlowe, who, if his private qualities had entitled him as much to respect as his genius did to admiration, would have stood high in the esteem of all lovers of art. Mr. West was an affectionate husband and father, and he was chosen president of the Royal Academy on account of his personal worth, as well as because he was deemed, from his general skill, judgment, and knowledge, the best qualified to succeed Sir Joshua Reynolds.

When Mr. West brought forward his picture of "Christ Rejected," it was purchased by many noblemen and other admirers of the fine arts. As a grateful return for their liberal protection, he had a medal struck, on one side of which was a profile of his face, and on the other a list of his subscribers. He presented one of these medals to me with the following letter, which I preserve with pride as the relic of a friend and a man of extraordinary genius:—

Mr. West presents his respects to his friend John Taylor, Esq., and requests that he will honour Mr. West by accepting the enclosed medal as a token of his great respect (as a friend for many years), and to keep it in his possession as a mark of that friendship.

Newman-street, July 19, 1816.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

JOHN STEWART, the traveller. With this gentleman, who was generally known by the name of Walking Stewart, I was intimately acquainted for many years, and I never knew a man with more diffusive benevolence, for he not only felt an interest in the welfare of mankind, but of all sensitive nature. He thought it loss of time to speculate on the origin of worlds. As Socrates was said to have brought philosophy down from heaven, it may be said of Stewart also, that he endeavoured to inculcate such doctrines as should induce human beings to promote the happiness of each other, and to consider that object as the chief interest as well as duty of man.

He held that there was a perpetual revolution in nature, and that, as Pope says,

"All forms that perish other forms supply;"

objecting, however, to the word perish, considering death as only the



dispersion of matter, and that it always would be connected with sensation. Hence he maintained that it was the eternal interest of man to exempt as much as possible all sensitive beings from pain, as, when he had lost the human form, he would become a part of all inferior animals of every description, and consequently the matter of which he once consisted would bear a portion of the pain inflicted upon beings susceptible of physical evil to a certain degree. For instance, in the case of a hackney horse, if you could induce those persons under whose control it might fall, to treat the animal kindly, they might be less liable to pain when they became a part of such an animal; and so of all other beings that might be brought under the government of man.

He used to enforce this system with a vast variety of illustrations, and with a powerful command of language. His father was an eminent linen-draper in Bond-street, who placed him at the Charter-house for a classical education, and in due time procured for him a writership in the service of the East India Company. After being some time in India, and discovering, as he conceived, many enormous abuses in our Asiatic settlements, he wrote to the directors at home, stating all those abuses and pointing out the means of remedy. No notice, as might be expected, was taken of his letter, and he wrote again, signifying that if the directors did not remove these abuses, which were injurious to the company and disgraceful to the British character, he should think himself privileged to relinquish the service, and seek employment among the native powers.

Finding all his efforts ineffectual, he quitted the British settlements, but was pursued, and refusing to return, he was actually shot, though not severely. He was then forced to return, but found an opportunity of escape. He was taken prisoner by the troops of Hyder Ally, and when brought to that potentate, was told by him that, if he did not enter into his army, he should be treated as a spy. He was therefore obliged to submit, in order to save his life, and was concerned in many actions under Hyder with other native powers. He was again wounded, but not materially. How long he remained in the service of Hyder, I know not. He afterward entered into the service of the Nabob of Arcot, in the civil department, and held the appointment of treating secretary. His office was to receive, entertain, and otherwise accommodate all persons who came as ambassadors, or on any public mission to the nabob. In this service he expended a great part of what he possessed, and the nabob was in arrears for salary to him to a very considerable amount.

Seeing no hope of being reimbursed, he determined to return to Europe, and resolved to visit Persia in his way home; but, finding that the Persian monarch was at war with a neighbouring power, he endeavoured to procure a passage in a mercantile vessel that was leaving the country. Being considered an infidel, he was not suffered to take his passage in the vessel, lest some evil should befall the captain and his crew, but a cage was provided for him on the side of the ship. He was exposed to the spray of the sea for a fortnight, but was pro-

vided with food every day, and suffered no other inconvenience than that of being in such an uncomfortable situation. He then visited various countries, and among others Lapland, in which he went a mile and a half beyond the place marked as the utmost limit of human visitation.

When I was first introduced to him in this country, he wore the Armenian habit. He continued to wear it till it was worn out, and then assumed the usual European attire. When he first returned from India, he possessed about 3000*l.*; how acquired I know not, but, I have no doubt, with perfect integrity, for he was a truly honest and honourable man; probably in the service of Hyder Ally, and other native princes, to whom he had rendered himself useful, for his knowledge was so various and extensive that he seemed to be acquainted with the secrets of all trades and callings. After trying various means to dispose of the major part of what he brought from India, he deposited it in the French funds, not long before the revolution. He was, I believe, to receive an annuity of 300*l.*, part of which was actually paid to him during the time of the revolutionary government; at length however it was wholly withdrawn. But with what he retained of his Asiatic acquirement he went to America; and on his return to this country was so reduced in his circumstances, that he was wholly dependent for support on a humane and respectable tradesman in the borough of Southwark, who had married his sister.

In America he supported himself by delivering lectures upon his system, as to its being the interest of man, in what he styled the state of personal identity, to exercise benevolence to every species of animal wherever he might have the opportunity. During his stay in America, he was reduced to so low a state as to solicit a very rich man to suffer him to sit by his kitchen fire, and allow him a johnny-cake daily for food. This johnny-cake, he said, was the value of a halfpenny; yet this rich man, who had known him in India, refused to grant either of his requests.

He at length returned to England, and threw himself again upon the protection of his brother-in-law. His sister, I believe, was dead. On the settlement of the affairs of the Nabob of Arcot, about sixteen thousand pounds were awarded to Stewart, after some difficulty in proving the justness of his claims. He then discharged all his pecuniary obligations to his brother-in-law, and some few debts, which, with all his moderation, he could not avoid contracting.

Previous to this decision in his favour, he lodged at the White Bear, in Piccadilly, and I believe, gratuitously, for the landlord had a great respect for him, and when I went to inquire for him, he always expressed an anxious wish for his return from America, and his readiness to afford him every accommodation. After his return from America, finding that the French revolutionary principles appeared to be gaining ground, and thinking that they were likely to destroy all regular governments, and to give an ascendancy to the mob, he again departed for America, considering that country as the only



secure asylum for the friends of order and rational freedom. He was, however, a friend to monarchy and legislative government; and even maintained that the authority of the laws, while not inconsistent with the civil liberty of the subject, should be rigidly enforced.

He considered me as one of his most particular friends, and used to visit me every Sunday morning for some years. I have many of his letters, which generally commenced in the following manner: "Dear fellow-part of our common integer, Nature," which I always endeavoured to answer in the same style. He published many works, most of which I possess. They are written in so lofty a style as to be generally unintelligible, particularly in the use of scientific terms with a novel application. His first work was entitled "Travels to discover the Source of Moral Motion;" and he laughed when people inquired as to the manners, customs, dress, or governments of the several countries he had visited, declaring that his purpose was to ascertain what were the principles of justice and morality which were held as standard rules in all places.

People with good understandings, who did not take the trouble of examining his doctrines, deterred by the peculiarity of the language, too hastily concluded that he was insane; but those who did examine them revered his understanding and admired his benevolence. In conversation he made his most difficult works clear by the aptness and variety of his illustrations. Though his mind appeared to be wholly absorbed in his doctrines, yet he seemed to be well acquainted with human nature, and his advice upon most subjects evinced so much knowledge and judgment, that he was never consulted on any matter of familiar life and business without advantage; and I heard a very intelligent lady, who was one of his great admirers, say, that she believed he could give the best directions even for "the making of a pudding."

When his claims on the nabob were satisfied, he immediately purchased an annuity for his life, and, as I heard, too hastily, for he might have obtained better terms if he had waited; but he had experienced the vicissitudes of life, and security was his chief object. He took apartments in Cockspur-street, and invited a few select friends to dine with him every Sunday, and I was always a favourite guest. After dinner, and before the wine was removed, he usually gave a lecture upon his own peculiar doctrines, but observing that his guests entered into general conversation, and did not appear to be very attentive to his discourse, he gave up the dinners, and substituted evening parties to tea and music, to which both sexes were invited: he engaged public performers to assist on the occasion, and his parties were usually well attended.

He was very fond of music, and purchased annual tickets at the theatres, but chiefly where he could hear most music, not caring the least for dramatic performances, or the words which accompanied the music.

Dramatic scenes of bloodshed he abhorred, and used to ask what impression the murders of Richard and Macbeth could be supposed

to make on him who had lived under tyrants in the east, where human life was never secure, and where not only families of all ranks, but whole districts have been swept off in a moment.

He deluded himself into a belief that his system of philosophy was so important, that it would in time become universally prevalent. He had an intention of having his name engraved on a projecting rock in the Atlantic, in the largest characters the place would admit, in order that passengers in ships, seeing the name, might be induced to examine his principles. He affected singularity in his dress, in order that, by attracting attention to his person, he might bring his doctrines into notice. He always dressed in black, and wore a spencer throughout the summer. He generally stuffed a red pocket-handkerchief into his breast, but in such a manner that part of it might be seen. I asked him why he did so. He said it looked buckish, attracted attention, and would consequently lead spectators to inquire into his doctrines, and thus give them a chance of being universally current.

He never liked to talk upon the subject of religion, because he did not wish to shake the religious opinions of any person, considering that they operate, like law, as a restraint upon irregular passions. In contradiction to those intelligent persons who, thinking him insane, would not take the trouble to examine his doctrines, I may state what was said of him by Mr. Combe, whose intellectual powers were of a high order. He told me that when he met Mr. Stewart in the street, and had some conversation with him, he never went away without feeling his mind enlarged.

Mr. Walker, author of "The Pronouncing Dictionary," and of many valuable works, once met Stewart at my house in Hatton Garden. They began to converse, and Walker, who, though a rigid Roman Catholic, was a very sensible man, quoted something from Scripture, which Stewart, being rather deaf, did not hear, for otherwise he would have thought a reference to Holy Writ, upon a philosophical subject so absurd that he would not have thought Walker worthy of any farther conversation. I contrived, however, to keep them upon the subject of the improvement of the mind, which was a primary object of both, and they parted in mutual good-humour.

If he were not questioned on the subject of the manners, customs, &c. of the various countries which he had visited, he would give very interesting relations upon those subjects, which otherwise he considered as too trifling to deserve notice. In these relations he displayed great humour, and admirable powers of mimicry and versatility, particularly in imitating the tone and manners of foreigners. How he could have obtained this knowledge, it is difficult to say, considering his abstraction from the ordinary concerns of life; it seemed like intuition.

Unwilling to press too much upon the kindness of his brother-in-law, he thought of studying and acting the part of Macheath, and to engage the Haymarket theatre for that purpose, conceiving that the singularity of his character would bring a full house. The fortunate



adjustment of his claims upon the nabob, however, frustrated his design.

Sadler's Wells, Astley's, and other minor theatres, were the places where he thought he could hear most music; but if any scenes of horror and bloodshed occurred during the performance, he always turned his back upon the stage.

Though he was so well acquainted with mankind, he was so little inclined to suspicion, that when a person addressed him in the Park, and entered into conversation with him, without learning who or what he was, he invited him to his dinner parties. Luckily the person was an American of respectable character.

He accounted for the earnestness with which he examined all subjects, and his great inclination to habits of reflection, by stating that his mother kept him under such strict discipline in the early part of his life, that even in putting down his hat, or doing any trifling action during her superintendence, he felt himself obliged to consider whether he should act in a manner that she would approve.\*

In fine mornings he used to seat himself on Westminster Bridge, in order to contemplate the passing crowd. Mr. Combe told me that he used to meet him for the purpose of engaging in conversation with him, and assured me that he never left Stewart without feeling his own mind enlarged by Stewart's acute remarks and profound reflections. Yet Combe was not likely to underrate his own powers, and was very capable of estimating those of others.

On Stewart's death, as a bottle was found empty in his bed-room which had contained laudanum, it was surmised that he purposely destroyed himself; but however circumstances might seem to justify such a suspicion, I never could give credit to it; for I am persuaded he thought his life of so much importance to man and all animals to which sensitive matter might be united, that he would have been glad to have had it extended till he saw the triumph of his benignant principles. He made two wills, one of which he had signed, and the other of a later date, which he intended to sign, and get attested the day after, but he died, as it appeared, suddenly in the night. By the latter will he had left fifty pounds to me, but the former was, of course, adopted. He had a complete command over his passions; when he was tempted towards any licentious indulgence, from which he had no religious principles to restrain him, he used to pause and consider how the money which it would cost him might be better employed. He then used to explore the haunts of poverty, and purchase in the neighbourhood articles of dress for the children that he saw in them, and give the parents money to buy food. He would, however, stay to see that it was devoted to the purpose for which he had bestowed it.

So intent was he upon the diffusion of his principles, that he actually walked to Edinburgh for the sole purpose of discussing them with

\* It is strange that Dr. Wolcot, though so daring in his satirical attacks upon public characters, told me that he was kept under rigid control by two aunts, who cowed his spirit to such a degree, that though he had long been released from their tyranny, he never should think himself a man.

the late Dugald Stewart, who happened at that time to be at a distance. His death deprived the world of an amiable man, and me of a sincere friend.

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

MR. JOHN OPIE, R.A. This artist was one of those whom nature ordains to rise into eminence, notwithstanding the lowness and obscurity of their origin. He was the son of a carpenter in Cornwall, and, at an early period, discovered a propensity to drawing, which his father did not discourage. Dr. Wolcot, having heard of the boy, and being fond of painting, desired to see him. For that purpose he went to the father's house, where he asked for John, and the boy presented himself. The doctor desired to see his drawings, and he ran across the yard to fetch them. Wolcot told me that he should always have in his ears the sound of the boy's leather apron clattering between his knees, as he ran eagerly to bring the proofs of his graphic skill. Rough and uncouth as these specimens of his talents were, the doctor was persuaded that he saw indications of a genius which deserved cultivation. He therefore took him into his own house at Fowey, and gave him all the instruction in his power.

Opie made such rapid improvement under the doctor's tuition, that he had soon the courage to offer himself to the inhabitants as a portrait-painter. His efforts were encouraged, but his gains at first were very small. I believe his original price was five shillings for a likeness. The next price was half-a-guinea, and he raised his demand in his progress to Exeter, where he boldly required a guinea, and then thought himself in the high road to affluence. He lived many years with Dr. Wolcot, as well as I can recollect, with whom he profited in literature as well as in painting.

Opie possessed a strong mind, and a retentive memory. He soon became conversant with Shakspeare and Dryden, and both understood and felt their beauties. He did not improve in his manners in proportion to his other attainments, for a blunt sincerity always characterized his behaviour. He had a strong sense of humour, and was capable of lively sallies, as well as of shrewd and forcible remarks. He readily acknowledged the merit of his competitors, particularly Sir Joshua Reynolds, and I never saw the least symptom of envy in his disposition. I was very intimate with him for many years, during the life of his wife; but as his second wife introduced new connexions, and a coolness had arisen between him and Dr. Wolcot, and as I was upon the most friendly footing with the doctor, I did not think it proper to keep up a close intercourse with both, and therefore seldom saw Opie again till during the illness which terminated in his death.



It was reported that a written compact had taken place between the doctor and Opie, in which the latter had agreed to give a certain share of his profits to the former, for the instruction which he had derived from him, as well as for his board, lodging, and other supplies while they had lived together. I believe this report was not wholly unfounded, and that the compact was dissolved by the interference of the father of Opie's first wife, which induced the doctor, in anger and disgust, to relinquish all claims upon the successful artist. The consequence was the coolness which I have mentioned; and after this adjustment, Wolcot and Opie seldom, if ever, met again.

It must be admitted, that Opie was much indebted to Wolcot for his early patronage, and afterward for his zealous literary support, particularly in his "Odes to the Royal Academicians." Indeed, there is too much reason to believe that the doctor's unjust and persevering attacks upon the works of Mr. West were indirectly intended as a sacrifice to the rising reputation of Opie. It was not to be expected that Opie would object to this poetical incense in his favour, because he had to rise among innumerable competitors; yet, from all I observed of his disposition, I am persuaded he was too liberal to excite, or to encourage the doctor in his severity on others, particularly on Mr. West, of whose talents and knowledge in his art he has often spoken to me with respect.

His rustic habits were too firmly fixed for him wholly to subdue them, yet nobody could better conceive what a gentleman should be; and during the latter years of his life, he endeavoured, and not without success, to illustrate his conception by his manners. His rough sincerity, however, was not merely the effect of his early associations with rustic society, for much of it was doubtless imputable to his domestic intercourse with Dr. Wolcot. The latter was vigorous in his manners, and according to the adage, that "everything begets its like," there is a contagion in temper from which it is difficult to escape in close association.

There is a well-written sketch of the life and character of Opie, in a very amusing work entitled "The Family Library," but as the author did not know the man, he has fallen into some mistakes. I do not believe, as that author states, that Opie was ever a menial servant of Wolcot's, but lived with him as a pupil and a companion. If he had lived with him in such a servile capacity, I am sure the doctor's pride and subsequent resentment would have induced him to state the fact. The first anger of Wolcot against Opie, as the former told me, arose at finding that Opie had supplanted him in the affections of a favourite female servant, "but," said the doctor, "I forgave him, as I knew, with Shakspeare, that 'Frailty, thy name is Woman.'"

That Opie was indebted to Wolcot for support and instruction during many years before he came to London, must be admitted. The doctor, therefore, might look for some remuneration from the compact into which they had mutually entered, and which he was reluctantly and resentfully induced to relinquish by the interposition, as I have said, of the father of Opie's first wife.

The biographical sketch which I have mentioned imputes to Wolcot a habit of swearing, but I can truly say, that during the long period I was acquainted with him (with some intervention), I never observed him swear more than people in general do when much excited; and that it was by no means his habit: strange, indeed, as the assertion may appear, I think no man had higher notions of a gentleman in the abstract, or even of romantic attachment to female beauty and merit, than Dr. Wolcot.

I remember one evening when I had been much irritated, and "perplexed in the extreme," by some untoward event, and expressed myself with too much vehemence, the doctor rebuked me, and said, "Taylor, be always elegant—never lose sight of the gentleman."

It is impossible to excuse his wanton attacks upon the good old King George the Third; but it is a disgrace to the public, that the success of those attacks should have tempted him to persevere in them. I am reluctant to palliate, in any respect, these indecent and disloyal levities, to use the mildest term, upon so amiable and benevolent a king; but I can venture solemnly to say that the doctor entertained the highest notion of the kingly character, and it was therefore because our revered monarch did not reach to his beau ideal of what a monarch should be, that he continued his satirical hostility. Indeed, it must be admitted, that pecuniary advantage was not without its influence on his mind; for though he possessed landed property, it was but small, and with little practice in his profession, if any, he might find it necessary to profit by his writings. He had, however, in the beginning, but little encouragement to proceed in his poetical career, for he assured me that his first "Odes on the Royal Academy" failed in attracting public notice, spirited and original as they must be deemed; the publication cost him forty pounds.

I have often wondered at the boldness of his attacks on the royal character, and his general license of satire, as he was naturally, by his own acknowledgment, by no means of an heroic disposition; but he was seduced by popular favour and its consequent pecuniary profit. He was once, indeed, so alarmed at the report that the law officers of government were disposed to notice his attempts to degrade the royal character, that he actually, as he told me, made preparations to depart suddenly for America; but, on reflection, determined to stay till legal proceedings had positively been commenced against him.

It has often been observed that his genius would have been more distinguished if he had employed his muse on some large work, rather than on temporary sallies; but genius must pursue its natural bent, and his did not incline towards elaborate compositions.

Opie, like most of the artists whom I have known, was afraid of the sarcastic powers of Fuseli, and therefore became intimately connected with him. To this fear, I am disposed to think, Fuseli was indebted for the several places which he was permitted to hold in the Royal Academy. Yet I know that Opie despised the works of Fuseli, though he was awed by the venom of his tongue, which spared neither friend nor foe.



A few more words on Fuseli, and he deserves but few. His works are in general distortions, and no person of sound taste would ever afford them house-room. I remember that Opie said to me of Fuseli's picture of a scene in Hamlet, representing the ghost of Hamlet's father, "The Royal Dane," that the ghost reminded him of those figures over the dials of chamber-clocks, which move by starts, according to the movements of the works within. In my opinion a very apt comparison, notwithstanding the opinion of my friend Mr. Combe (Dr. Syntax), who said of this picture that it gave him the only idea which painting had ever suggested to him of an apparition.

Dr. Wolcot said of Fuseli's representation of a scene in "The Midsummer Night's Dream," that the number of wild fantastic figures scattered over it made it look exactly like a toy-shop. I never liked Fuseli, and, fearless of his satire, never concealed my opinion. The late Mr. Farington, an excellent artist and a worthy and intelligent man, knew that Fuseli was no favourite with me, and anxious to serve him, he came and invited me to meet him at dinner, bringing with him Fuseli's lectures, which had just been published, and requesting that I would take extracts from them for insertion in a public journal which I then conducted. He said, "I know you do not like Fuseli, but when I tell you that he is in but indifferent circumstances, I know you will meet and endeavour to serve him." I met him, and the late Sir George Beaumont was of the party. The mild and elegant manners of that amiable baronet had an influence upon Fuseli, who endeavoured to make himself agreeable, and the day passed off very pleasantly.

Not long after I met Fuseli in company, and he asked me when I had seen Farington, and having told him that it was some time ago, he said, loud enough for the company to hear him, "Then he don't want a puff." Such was his gratitude to the liberal friend who had interfered in his favour.

Another time I dined with him at the house of Mr. Boaden, a gentleman well known in the literary world. Mr. Colman and Mr. Charles Kemble were among the company. Fuseli, being asked for a toast, gave "Peter Pindar." When his turn came to drink his own toast, he refused, saying, "I give him as a toast, but I will not drink to his honour." Stupid as this conduct was, his admirers, perhaps, may consider his answer as a *bon mot*.

I could say much more respecting Fuseli, but as it would not be in his favour, I check my pen, wondering, however, that, as an artist or a wit, he could have ever been the subject either of fear or panegyric; though he certainly was the subject of fear on account of his sarcastic disposition, and to that probably, as I have said, he was indebted for admission into the Royal Academy, and for the situations in it that were conferred on him.

To return to Opie. He had great power of raillery, and I have witnessed a contest between him and Dr. Wolcot, who uttered very strong things, when Opie maintained his part so well as to render the victory doubtful. They were neither of them sparing in personal severity, but never came to a serious quarrel.

It has been said that Opie was slow in commending the works of his competitors, but, as far as I had an opportunity of observing his character, I was induced to form a contrary opinion. I know that he bestowed liberal praise on the productions of the late Mr. Owen, and also on those of Northcote. He always spoke in terms of the highest commendation of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and I remember that, alluding to a scene painted by that great artist from "*The Midsummer Night's Dream*," he expressed the utmost delight at the contemplative posture in which Bottom is represented with the ass's head, leaning on his arm in pensive meditation. In fact, I have heard him as warm in praising contemporary productions in his art, as in his admiration of his favourite poets Shakspeare and Dryden.

It has been observed also that little has been said respecting his first wife. I knew her well, and am disposed to speak more with regret than severity on the cause which deprived her of her husband. Opie was devoted to his art, to which he chiefly and almost solely seemed to direct his attention. He had many visitors, and among them some, perhaps, who took advantage of his professional absorption, and flattered his young and agreeable wife. She was a pretty little woman, with pleasing and unaffected manners. Being left much to herself, and at liberty to go abroad when and where she pleased, it was not wonderful that, comparing the unavoidable neglect of her husband with the persevering attention of a gallant, she should manifest the frailty of human nature. A Major Edwards was the successful gallant, and after the separation from Opie was legally confirmed, he married her, a strong proof in support of her expected fidelity. He died, and, as I have heard, left her in respectable independence. Since the death of the major I have heard that she has constantly resided with her brother, who holds some military employment, and that she always accompanies him wherever he may be called by his military duty. I was well acquainted with her, and introduced my former wife to her, which assuredly I should not have done if I had observed any incorrectness of conduct or manners.

Mr. Opie's second wife has rendered herself so conspicuous in society by her literary talents and accomplishments in private life, that no eulogium on my part can add to the general estimation in which her character is held. I knew her a little before her marriage, and saw in the lively girl a promise of those talents which have been since so much and so deservedly admired. She evinced her regard for the memory of her husband by giving his remains an honourable and splendid funeral, which I was invited to attend, among some of the most distinguished literary characters and eminent artists of the time, and the body was deposited in the vaults of St. Paul's Cathedral. She also employed the elder Mr. Smirke to design an appropriate memorial, from which an excellent print was engraved, and distributed among the numerous friends and connexions who had been invited to the mournful ceremony of interment.

Such was the close of Opie's life, a man who raised himself into merited distinction and comparative affluence by great original powers,



and who, if he had possessed the advantage of being born in a higher station, and also of having had his mind cultivated in early life, would, most probably, have distinguished himself in any province to which his talents might have been directed that demanded the great intellectual energy.

As a proof that his mind was of no ordinary cast, I have heard Mr. Northcote, a profound judge of human nature, say of Opie, that his mind was superior to that of any other person whom he ever knew, and that all other men were children to him. As Opie was more intimate with Northcote than with any other person, and as the latter had full opportunities of estimating his character, the testimony of so acute and intelligent a man may well be received without hesitation. On the other hand, I can with equal truth declare, that Opie entertained the highest opinion of the mental powers and professional merits of Mr. Northcote, as is evident from the intimate intercourse which subsisted between them, for they were together almost every evening at each other's houses.

Northcote had the advantage of a good education, and had improved his mind by travelling to Rome, that great repository of the arts, as well as to most places in Italy and France celebrated for the possession of graphic treasures; and Opie, with great original powers, came under the description which Hesiod gives of those who, by their own intellectual faculties, can discern what is right and fit by a kind of intuitive perception. I could say much more on this subject, but as one of these friends is living, I might, perhaps, be suspected of flattery to him, though I can confidently declare, that in what I have said of both, I have been wholly influenced by sincerity and conviction. I may, however, say something more of Mr. Northcote, whom I knew long before I was acquainted with Opie, and as his mental powers and professional merits are so well known, I need not fear that I shall be biassed by the zeal of friendship.

As this gentleman, besides the advantage of foreign travel, where he had abundant opportunities of beholding and studying the best examples of graphic excellence, was many years under the same roof with Sir Joshua Reynolds, he must have proved an enlightened and instructive companion to his friend Opie. The house of Sir Joshua, in Leicester Square, might well be considered as the temple of genius and taste. It was visited by the most distinguished characters of the time. Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Colman, and indeed the whole galaxy of celebrated scholars and wits were its constant visitors. Mr. Northcote, being long an inmate in the house, and bringing a mind capable of comprehending and sharing in the conversation, must have laid in intellectual treasures of the most valuable description. Hence it was impossible that Mr. Opie could have found a friend and companion who could have contributed more to the refinement of his taste, to the improvement of his manners, and the enlargement of his knowledge.

The value of Mr. Northcote's conversation is evident in a publica-

tion by the late Mr. Hazlitt, an author of well-known merit, who has detailed the opinions and remarks of the former in a volume which must be deemed a very interesting and instructive work, not only for the student in art, but to the general reader. It would not become me to obtrude my opinion of Mr. Northcote's professional merits, nor is it necessary, as his reputation has long been established by the most enlightened judges. His success as a portrait-painter has been considerable, and has afforded him an independence that enables him to regard with indifference, if not contempt, the fluctuations of taste and the caprices of fashion. As an historical painter he stands pre-eminent among the artists of this country; and if it were not necessary for those who were not born in the lap of affluence to provide against the instability of fortune, it might well be regretted, for the sake of the ornamental character of the country, that he had not confined his genius wholly to historical composition.

It is gratifying to learn that many of his historical paintings adorn private cabinets, and that many of his altar-pieces embellish our sacred edifices; and by the appropriate expression and dignity with which the respective subjects are treated, they may enforce the doctrines of truth, attract the attention of the dissolute, and confirm the hopes of the pious.

Before I quit Mr. Northcote, I will subjoin a copy of a letter which I received from him soon after the publication of my two volumes of poems, as it shows the intrepid sincerity of the writer.

MY DEAR MR. TAYLOR,

I can scarcely find words to express to you my admiration of your excellent prologues and epilogues,—so various, so witty, so moral, so natural, and so poetic. I wish the whole work had contained nothing else; it would then have been, indeed, a jewel of the first water; but when you make verses on Mr. —, Mr. —, Mr. Northcote, and Mr. —, my God, what a change! I no longer know the same author. It seems to me like a change in a farce, where we see a regal throne quickly turned into a wheelbarrow, &c.; or as if somebody had blown your brains out. If ever you write any more verses upon me, pray suppose me to be either a tragedy or a comedy, and make a prologue or an epilogue for me; and I dare say that Mr. — and Mr. — will join me in my petition on the occasion. But I can easily account for the great difference. When you write a prologue or an epilogue, you feel all the terror of that powerful and remorseless beast, a full assembled audience, before your eyes, which keeps you tremblingly alive in fear of immediate public shame. But when you write verses to flatter a fool, you sleep over them, and think any thing is good enough. Wishing you much success in your publication, and in every other way, I remain always,

My dear sir,

Your sincere friend and very humble servant,

JAMES NORTHCOTE.



Pray remember to present my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Taylor, whose approbation of my picture of Christ gave me real pleasure, as it was given with so much feeling.

Argyle Place,  
August 18th, 1827.

I insert this letter with the permission of the author, who would readily have consented to the introduction of the names of the artists referred to if I could have thought proper.

---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

**MR. RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE.** My-intercourse with this gentleman was of so slight a nature, that I can have no reason to introduce him into this work except from my sincere respect for his character, talents, attainments, and compositions; but he held so high a reputation, and upon such solid grounds, that it is a kind of duty to pay a respectful tribute to his memory. I had the pleasure of being introduced to him by my old friend Dr. Monsey, and of dining with him at the governor's table at Chelsea Hospital, when there was nobody present but the doctor, Mr. Cambridge, and myself. I was then well acquainted with the literary productions of Mr. Cambridge, and was therefore particularly attentive to every thing he said; and I now sincerely regret that I had not, early in life, conceived the design of the present work, for then I should have endeavoured to retain in my memory many observations and events perhaps of much greater importance than any I have now been able to record.

As Dr. Monsey had seldom an opportunity of seeing Mr. Cambridge, and was sufficiently aware of the value of his guest, he gave the rein of conversation entirely to him, and was as attentive as myself. Part of the conversation passed on the politics of the day, but was soon transferred to literary topics, which seemed to be the favourite subjects with Mr. Cambridge. Unhappily, the cares and troubles of the world have demanded too much of my attention to admit of accurate recollections of innumerable circumstances which have occurred in the course of a long-protracted life. But I deem it an honour to have known Mr. Cambridge, and am proud of the opportunity of introducing his name on the present occasion.

I remember that in speaking of Don Quixote, he declared he considered it one of the greatest productions of the human mind, and supported his opinions with reasons which it would be much for my advantage if I could recollect. He seemed to think that Goldsmith had been overrated as a poet, but spoke very favourably of his prose works. He said he thought the best lines in all Goldsmith's poetical works were his character of Garrick in "Retalia-

tion," as nicely discriminated, humorously combined, and admirably appropriate."

Dr. Monsey, with whom Mr. Cambridge's poem of "The Scribbleriad" was a great favourite, mentioned it with high praise, and expressed his surprise that it was not more a favourite with the world at large. Mr. Cambridge spoke of it modestly, as a work that had given him little trouble, and said that it was chiefly composed while he was under the hands of his hairdresser. The remark of the doctor, whether suggested on that or any other occasion, induced Mr. Cambridge to send him the following *jeu d'esprit*, which I insert with pleasure, as it is so complimentary to the taste and judgment of my old friend, who was himself an excellent humorous poet.

TO DOCTOR MONSEY,

*Physician to Chelsea Hospital,*

*Upon his expressing his surprise that "The Scribbleriad" was not more known and talked of.*

Dear doctor, did you ever hear I had  
So piqued myself on "The Scribbleriad,"  
That every pensioner of Chelsea  
The learning and the wit should well see?  
Enough for me if only one see,  
But let that one be Doctor Monsey.

It is not in my power to do justice to "The Scribbleriad," which is really a work not only of "learning and wit," to use the words of the author, but of rare and profound learning, as well as of great humour and poetical merit. The object is to ridicule false learning, absurd inventions, superstition, and the general follies of mankind. It is little creditable to the taste of the public that such a work should not have become popular, and it may fairly be said, that the fault is not the want of any intellectual power in the author, but in the ignorance and want of taste in the readers.

When Archdeacon Cambridge published the life and works of his venerable father, there appeared in a certain northern vehicle of criticism, remarkable for vanity and dashing audacity, a very flip-pant account of the publication. It was my intention to have written an answer to this frivolous and unjust attack upon the works of so accomplished a scholar and so excellent a poet as Mr. Cambridge; but reflecting that I was no match for the young gentlemen that were then reported to be the conductors of that source of northern asperity, self-conceit, and censorious violence, and that the archdeacon's tribute of filial respect to the memory of his father was a substantial monument of parental excellence that time could not impair, I desisted from the rash undertaking.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Cambridge a second time, and the conversation chiefly related to Dr. Monsey. I afterward, for the last time, saw him walking arm in arm with Lord North, then



prime minister, who seemed very attentive to him, and to be laughing at something which he was saying.

My late friend Mr. Jerningham related to me the following whimsical anecdote, but did not vouch for the truth of it. Mr. Cambridge had observed the following inscription over a hatter's shop just as the painter had finished the letters—"Good hats sold here." Crossing the way, and making a suitable apology, he politely addressed the master of the shop, observing that he hoped he would excuse his making a remark on the inscription. The hatter said he should be much obliged to him, and desired to hear what he had to say. "Why," said Mr. Cambridge, "the word 'good' seems unnecessary; for if you did not sell *good* hats, no customer would come again." "True," said the hatter. "Painter! rub out *good*." Pray, sir, have you any thing more to say?—I beseech you go on." "Why," said Mr. Cambridge, "the word 'hats' is certainly needless; for if people looked at your shop-window, and saw nothing but hats, they would not expect to buy meat, or any thing but hats." "True, again," said the man. "Painter! rub out *hats*. Well, sir, is all right now?" "No, certainly," rejoined Mr. Cambridge; "the word 'sold' would be ridiculous if it were to remain, for nobody would expect you to *give away* your hats." "Very true," said the man. "Painter, rub out *sold*," adding, "Now, sir, I suppose you have no farther objection." "Yes, one more," said Mr. Cambridge; "the word 'here' is perfectly absurd by itself, for nobody would go to another shop to buy your hats." "Quite right," said the man. "Painter! rub out *here*;" and then he courteously thanked Mr. Cambridge for his kindness.

MR. JAMES COBB. Perhaps there never existed an individual who was more respected, or who more deserved respect, within his sphere of action, than this gentleman. From his entrance as a clerk in the East India House, through all his official gradations till he became secretary to the Honourable East India Company, he conciliated all who knew him by the mildness of his manners and the benevolence of his disposition; and a line from Pope has been justly applied to him as the reason why he was so much esteemed:—

Because he's honest and the best of friends.

He possessed talents that would have enabled him to make a distinguished figure in any superior station. His dramatic works may be referred to as evident proofs of his literary talents; and though all of them succeeded and gave popularity to his name, no degree of public favour could inflate him with vanity, or lessen that modesty which was an essential feature of his character. But his modesty was perfectly consistent with a manly spirit, which exerted itself in company with humour and intelligence. He was fond of the stage, and though he produced many dramatic works, they were all the effusions of his leisure.

He told me that Mr. Burke advised him, in all his dramatic compositions, to study the dialogue of "Vanbrugh," and he doubtless

would have followed the counsel of so high an authority, if his productions had not been of a different kind from those of that celebrated dramatist. He was fond of music, and sung with great taste and impressive spirit. How well he could blend heroic with humorous characters, and supply suitable and appropriate dialogue to both, is evident in his "Siege of Belgrade," and his "Haunted Tower."

His farces are marked by humour without extravagance, and his songs are characterized by sentiment, lyrical elegance, and pure humour, according to the subject. At the desire of Mr. Sheridan, he wrote a prelude on the removal of the Drury-lane company of actors to the King's Theatre, preparatory to the rebuilding of the former. This prelude was written, but one whimsical stroke was introduced by Mr. Sheridan. One of the characters, describing the difficulty of removing the scenes, &c., from Drury-lane Theatre, said that there was so pelting a storm in Chandos-street, that they were obliged "to carry the rain under an umbrella."

I could say more with strict justice, in favour of this gentleman, but his character is so amply and so justly portrayed in "A History of the Clubs of London," admirably written, and attributed to Mr. March, a barrister, and formerly in parliament, whom I have the pleasure of knowing, that I must refer the reader to that work for a spirited and faithful portrait of my esteemed and lamented friend James Cobb.

**MR. PRINCE HOARE.** It is difficult to render even ordinary justice to living merit without incurring the suspicion of being influenced by partiality, or by motives of a less honourable nature. Yet, as what I shall say of this gentleman, whose friendship I have enjoyed for nearly forty years, and still possess in unabated cordiality, will be supported by all who are acquainted with him, I am under no apprehension of suffering by the suggestions of malice.

Mr. Prince Hoare is the son of Mr. Hoare, who was one of the original members of the Royal Academy, and the most eminent portrait-painter in crayons of his time. Indeed this is too limited a tribute to his merit, for his excellence in crayon painting can never perhaps be excelled, though it possibly may be equalled. Mr. Prince Hoare has a portrait by his father of Alexander Pope, in oil-painting, which evidently proves that if the skilful artist had devoted himself to that province of his profession, he might have risen to the same height of reputation as he attained with his favourite crayons.

His son, Mr. Prince Hoare, is a compound character of the most extraordinary description. Nature has endowed him with great talents, which he has improved by study and by travel. His taste originally impelled him to pursue the profession of his father, not as a painter in crayons, but on canvass; yet, at the same time, he felt an equal propensity towards literary pursuits; and delicacy of health induced him at length to prefer the serene enjoyment of literary retirement, which the wealth and affection of his father enabled him readily to indulge. Prince Hoare therefore, sanctioned by parental



authority and indulgence, was prompted to relinquish all graphic ambition, and resign himself to studious contemplation rather than continue a practical but laborious pursuit of the fine arts: he consequently devoted himself to literature.

As a proof that there is an extraordinary mixture of qualities in his character, he is witty and humorous in a high degree in his literary compositions, though serious in his conduct. His dramatic productions abound almost to extravagance in humour, while his deportment in private life, though lively and playful when the occasion is suitable, is always moral, pious, and without ostentation, perceptive and exemplary. His critical powers are judicious and acute.

I remember that when a controversy arose between the Rev. W. L. Bowles, who seems to be too anxious to see his name in public, and Lord Byron, on the genius of Pope, and a pamphlet was produced on both sides, Mr. Hoare, in a conversation with me on the subject, observed, that his lordship had liberally supported the learning and genius of the poet in moral and poetical subjects, but had cautiously avoided all particular notice of his satirical powers, as they were the only qualities that could be brought in comparison with his own. As Mr. Hoare could have no personal interest in the controversy, I was struck by the originality and shrewdness, as well as candour of this observation, and in justice to him venture to record it here. For fear that I should, in the warmth of friendship, subject myself to the imputation of motives which I disdain, I will here conclude, after acknowledging myself indebted to Mr. Hoare's kindness, with subjoining what my late friend Mr. George Dance, the celebrated architect, says of him in his "Collection of Contemporary Portraits," annexed to his likeness of Mr. Prince Hoare.

"Prince Hoare, author of various dramatic and other writings. Born and educated at Bath; instructed in painting by his father, William Hoare, one of the original members of the Royal Academy. He went to Italy for the farther acquirement of his art, and studied at Rome under Mengs; but after his return, through infirm health, declined the profession. The following are his dramatic productions, of which a few only are published:—'Julia, or such Things were;'—tragedy. 'Indiscretion;' 'Sighs, or the Daughter;' 'The Partners;'—comedies. 'No Song no Supper;' 'The Cave of Trophobius;' 'Dido;' 'The Prize;' 'My Grandmother;' 'Three and the Deuce;' 'Lock and Key;' 'Mahmoud;' 'The Friend in Need;' 'The Captive of Spilberg;' 'Italian Villagers;' 'Chains of the Heart;'—musical pieces.

"In consequence of succeeding, in 1799, to the honorary appointment of secretary for foreign correspondence to the Royal Academy, he published 'Academic Annals of Paintings, Sculpture, and Architecture,' a work since continued by the academy at successive periods; and shortly afterward, 'An Inquiry into the Requisite Cultivation and Present State of the Arts of Design in England.' 'The Artist,' a collection of essays, written chiefly by professional persons, (to which he contributed several papers), is edited by him.

"In 1813 he published 'Epochs of Art,' containing historical observations on the uses and progress of painting and sculpture. This last work is dedicated to the prince regent. He is author of a little piece entitled 'Love's Victims,' and some tracts of a moral tendency." So far Mr. Dance.

I had the pleasure of writing the epilogue to "Indiscretion," and the prologue to "Sighs, or the Daughter," and was not a little gratified in being thought worthy of adding my metrical mites to the productions of so elegant a writer. Besides the works above enumerated by Mr. Dance, Mr. Prince Hoare in 1820 published "Memoirs of the late Granville Sharpe, Esq.," a gentleman universally esteemed for his learning, piety, and political rectitude. I shall now take leave of the subject, which I have been inclined to prolong because I have found Mr. Prince Hoare the warmest and most estimable of my friends.

Here I intended to take leave of my friend Prince Hoare, but it would be unjust indeed if I were to omit noticing his last production, which not only illustrates the extraordinary combination of his intellectual powers and pursuits, but his strong sense of religion, and desire of promoting the happiness of mankind. In the year 1825 he published a tract entitled "Easter: a companion to the Book of Common Prayer." This small but valuable work is a manual explanatory of all the Latin words and phrases, and other appropriate terms of the church service, with other matters essential to the due comprehension of its important subject. In this interesting and learned work, which would do honour to any ecclesiastical authority, he has modestly suppressed his name, and published it under the simple designation of "A Layman."

MAJOR GROSE. I have before mentioned this gentleman incidentally, but his character deserves a more direct notice. He was one of the most jocose, intelligent, and entertaining companions with whom it was ever my good fortune to meet. He was remarkably fat, and there was a drawing of him made by Mr. Nathaniel Dance, afterward Sir Nathaniel Holland, which is admirably drawn, and a very strong and characteristic likeness. He told me, as a specimen of Irish humour, that passing through St. Patrick's Market, Dublin, a butcher, attracted by his portly form, approached him, and patting him on the breast, said, with laughing freedom, "Arrah, say you bought your beef of me."

Major Grose was the author of innumerable works of humour, which were justly admired, but the chief of them was, "Advice to the Officers of the Army," in the manner of Swift's "Advice to Servants." The major was of a very kind and friendly disposition, and permitted a Captain Williamson to assume the merit of having written this work, though it was previously well known by his private friends that it was his own production. I knew that if I asked him directly whether he was the author, he would evade the question, or not give me a satisfactory answer. I therefore expressed my surprise that, as the fact was known, he would suffer another to usurp his reputation. He said that Williamson was a person of literary talents, with-



out any friends to promote his views in life, and therefore, as he did not want the reputation arising from a work of that kind, he willingly resigned it in favour of a young man with scanty means and no promising protection.

I knew Williamson, and from what I observed of his character and talents, considered him as capable of grave political discussion, but without any indication of the wit and humour which abound in the work in question. This work has been ascribed to the late Marquis Townshend, who was celebrated for his satirical powers, but they were chiefly exercised in graphic caricatures and convivial conversation. My friend Colonel Sir Ralph Hamilton is positively convinced that the real author was Lord Townshend; but with all respect for his talents, opinions, and opportunities, I am equally convinced that it was the production of my old facetious friend Major Grose. It is not improbable that as Sir Ralph was intimate with Lord Townshend, and had a high opinion of his lordship's powers, he credited the report with the credulity of friendship.

It has been said in support of Lord Townshend's claim, that Major Grose was only a militia officer, and not likely to obtain a knowledge of all the tricks, artifices, and abuses so humorously detailed in this work; but Grose was a man of great research and observation, and it is more probable that he should obtain the requisite information than a nobleman of high rank as an officer, from whom such information would be studiously concealed, or whose notice it would probably have escaped, even with active inquiry on his part. But rumour only assigns the work to Lord Townshend, and that supposition is chiefly, if not wholly, confined to military people; while the world at large ascribes it to Major Grose, who was a man of indisputable veracity, and who acknowledged himself to be the author.

Major Grose told me that when he was quartered in Dublin, he ordered an Irish sergeant to exercise the men in shooting at a mark. The sergeant had placed a pole for them to take aim, stationing a certain number on one side, and an equal number on the other, in direct opposition. The major happened to reach the spot just as they were going to fire, stopped them, and expressed his surprise that the sergeant should have placed them in so dangerous a position, as they must necessarily wound, if not kill each other. "Kill each other!" said the sergeant, "why, they are all our own men." As the men so contentedly remained in the dangerous position, it may be inferred that they were as wise as the sergeant. This story illustrates that of Lord Thomond's cocks, which, when the keeper let loose, were fighting each other,—much to his surprise, he said, as they belonged to one person, and were "*all on the same side.*"

The last time I saw the major was at the apartments of my old friend the Rev. Mr. Penneck. The major lamented that he had forgotten to leave a message at his lodgings in Holborn. I told him that I was going home to my house in Hatton Garden, and if he would write a note, I would run with it in my way home. "Oh!

pray do not *run* with it," said the unwieldy wag, "for then I can never return the obligation *in kind*."

MR. HENRY JAMES PYE. This gentleman, who was fully qualified for the situation of poet-laureat by profound learning and poetical genius, I had the pleasure of knowing many years, and though myself incompetent to offer any remarks on his "Birthday Odes," and those on the "New Year," yet he paid me the compliment of asking my opinion, and sometimes condescended to adopt my suggested emendations. His translation of the "Poetic of Aristotle" is, I am assured, faithful and spirited.

Having heard that the late Mr. Kemble had made some marginal remarks on that translation, he requested me to tell the latter that he should be happy to present him with another copy of the work, if he would let him have that which was most probably amended by his remarks. I did so of course, but whether the exchange was made I know not, and I only mention the matter to show in what respect Mr. Pye held the judgment and knowledge of my friend Kemble.

Mr. Pye was an upright magistrate, and a good poet as well as a good scholar, as he has abundantly proved by his various productions. His epic poem of Alfred may be said to breathe the true spirit of poetry, as well as to evince a judicious conception of character. I believe he wrote but one dramatic piece, to which he did me the honour of asking me to write the epilogue. I did so, proud to have my name associated with that of a man of such genius, learning, and worth. I intended it for Mrs. Siddons to deliver, but it was too much after performing the heroine of the piece, and was well spoken by Miss Mellon, now Duchess of St. Alban's.

Mr. Pye also proved himself a philosopher. He was once a member of parliament for Berkshire, in which county he was said to possess an estate eighteen miles in circumference; yet, after his generous and munificent disposition had deprived him of it, he was content to live in a simple cottage upon grounds which had once been his own. He was a zealous friend and an annual contributor of a poetical tribute to that admirable institution, The Literary Fund, but an impediment in his speech prevented him from animating it by his own recitation.

Mr. Barford, whom I have before mentioned as connected with Moody, was a very worthy, good-natured man. He was, I believe, an upholsterer by profession, and an agent for some liquor company, whose interests he supported with great zeal and activity. He was in great intimacy with a gentleman of large fortune who had retired from business. This gentleman liked Barford as a companion, and used frequently to give him an 'airing in his carriage, but when he had occasion to call on a friend, he would not permit Barford to alight with him, lest he should take the opportunity of pressing the interest of the liquor company. At one of these visits, while Barford remained in the carriage, he stretched himself frequently through the window, for the purpose of attracting the notice of the gentleman of the house, who at length came forth, and requested



Barford to enter. The latter, however, knew that by so doing he should displease the friend whom he had accompanied, and therefore declined the invitation. Barford continued to stretch forward as before, and drew out the gentleman of the house again, who then said, if he would not alight, he would probably take some refreshment. Barford readily assented, and reflecting upon what the gentleman was least likely to have in the cellar, requested a glass of brown stout. The gentleman expressed his regret that, though he was well provided with most other liquors, he did not happen to have any brown stout. "No brown stout!" said Barford, with affected astonishment, finding that he had effected his purpose; "Sir, if you will give me an order, I will send you any quantity of the best in England." Barford's success in many overtures of the same kind tempted him to persevere, and he was thus essentially useful to the company of which he was the agent.

The celebrated Earl of Bath was anxious one night to prolong the sitting of a jovial company, and when one of his guests adverted to the lateness of the hour which the watchman was calling, "Pooh," said his lordship, "do not mind that fellow, he is never in the same story an hour together." During the absence of the same nobleman from town, his lady had ordered the white shelves in his library to be painted the colour of mahogany. His lordship, on observing the change, said to the lady, "Well, my friends will now generally find me in a *brown study*."

The celebrated Mrs. Woffington, who had lived with Garrick, afterward lived with Lord Darnley, who fancied that he could attach her to him by more than interested motives, if he kept her from the sight of Garrick, whom she professed to have really loved. Lord Darnley therefore exacted a promise from her, that she would not see Garrick during his absence from town, freely permitting her to see anybody else. He however thought proper to have a spy to watch her, and found, that notwithstanding her promise, Garrick visited her in his absence. He took the first opportunity of telling her he had thought he could depend on her promise, but found he was mistaken, accusing her of having seen Garrick. "Garrick!" said she, thinking that what he said arose from mere jealousy, "I have not seen him for a long time." Lord Darnley then declared he knew she had seen Garrick the night before. Finding evasion useless, she exclaimed, "Well! and is not that a long time?" She was a perfidious woman. She lived till her death with General Cæsar, and they had agreed that the survivor should possess all the property of both; but when she was really on her death-bed, she sent for an attorney, made her will during the absence of the general, and bequeathed the whole of her property to her sister Mrs. Cholmondeley. Lord Cholmondeley, whose nephew had married Mrs. Woffington's sister, was much offended at what he considered a degrading union in the family; but, on being introduced to Mrs. Woffington some months after the match, he was so much pleased with her, that he declared, though he had been at first offended at the match, he was

then reconciled to it. Mrs. Woffington, who had educated and supported her sister, coldly answered, "My lord, I have much more reason to be offended at it than your lordship, for I had before but one beggar to maintain, and now I have two."

I was once in company with her sister, Mrs. Cholmondeley, who seemed to think herself a wit, endeavoured to monopolize the conversation, and evidently betrayed the vulgarity of her origin. Mrs. Woffington, in her infancy, was actually one of the children who were appended to the feet of Madame Violante, a famous dancer on the tight rope in Dublin. This fact I learned from the late Duke of Leeds, who told me he had been assured of it by Mr. King, the celebrated comic actor.

Garrick has been represented by his enemies as a mean man, but I am happy to be able to relate a striking proof of his benevolence. Mr. Berenger, who was deputy-master of the horse, was a particular friend of Garrick. He was a man of learning, of elegant manners, and of literary talents. I believe he wrote a treatise on Equitation, and published a small volume of poems. There is a cento on Shakespeare, possessing more than ordinary merit, as it appears in Dodsley's "Collection of Poems." Being a gentleman of fashionable habits, and living chiefly with people of rank, his expenses far exceeded his income, and he was obliged to confine himself to his official house in the King's Mews, which was then a privileged place. His friends lamented the loss of so accomplished a companion, and by Garrick's instigation, entered into a subscription to compound with the holders of his bonds and notes, the apprehension of whom had induced him to keep at home. The subscription was so ample, that under the management of Garrick, who understood the business better than the rest of the subscribers, Berenger was released from all his difficulties; and on the first day that he could safely venture abroad, Garrick, who had been a liberal subscriber, gave a grand dinner in honour of his release. When the company were assembled before dinner, Garrick, addressing Berenger, told him that his restoration to his friends was a subject of so much gratification to them, that there ought to be a *feu-de-joie* on the occasion. He then brought forward all the notes and bonds which had been purchased of the creditors, and said, "I'll have the honour of setting it a-light." He immediately threw them into the grate, and set the pile on fire, together with a bond of 500*l.* for which Berenger was indebted to him. Other proofs of the liberality of his disposition are well known, and as my old friend Donaldson said in an epitaph which he wrote on Garrick's death,—if he was saving, it was for the purpose of enabling himself to be generous. Yet this is the man who was generally taxed with avarice.\*

\* Mr. Berenger wrote the following lines on the comparative effects of the performance of King Lear by Garrick and Barry :

The town has found out different ways  
To praise the different Lears ;  
To Barry it gives loud huzzas,  
To Garrick only tears.



Mrs. Porter, a celebrated actress in the time of Colley Cibber, was one night performing Queen Elizabeth, in the tragedy of "The Earl of Essex," before Queen Anne. The queen, happening to drop her fan on the stage, Mrs. Porter, with great dignity, and in the full spirit of the character she was representing, immediately addressed one of the performers, and with a commanding aspect said, "Take up our sister's fan." The audience received this sally with great

I have seen both of these celebrated performers in that character, and can attest the truth of the lines, for young as I was, I well remember that at Garrick's representation of the part, white handkerchiefs were seen among the ladies in every box. I remember also, that though Barry's fine figure and dignified deportment excited great applause, there was no such appearance of sympathizing tenderness; and having previously seen Garrick, Barry's Lear appeared to me cold and tame in comparison. The contest between Garrick and Barry in Romeo, of which, with all their respective excellence, the town grew tired, occasioned the following epigram, which appeared in one of the newspapers, and I understood run through the others, for the struggle took place long before my time.

Well! what to-night? says angry Ned,  
As up from bed he rouses,  
Romeo again! and shakes his head,  
— Ah! plague on both your houses!

Garrick was himself naturally tired of the contest, as the audience began to fall off; and wrote the two following epigrams:—

So revers'd are the notions of Capulet's daughters,  
One loves a whole length, and the other three quarters.

Fair Juliet at one house exclaims with a sigh,  
No Romeo is clever that's not six feet high;  
Less ambitiously t'other does Romeo adore,  
Though in size he scarce reaches to five feet and four.

These lines my old friend Cooke, the barrister, received from Garrick himself, and I believe they were never before published.

Garrick's Juliet was the celebrated Mrs. Cibber, and Barry's was a Miss Nossiter, a woman of fortune, fond of the stage, but more fond of Barry, to whom she presented a pair of diamond shoe-buckles. A lady of fashion being asked her opinion of the two Romeos, said, "When I saw Garrick, if I had been his Juliet, I should have wished him to leap up into the balcony to me; but when I saw Barry, I should have been inclined to jump down to him." There can be little doubt that the fine figure of Barry made a great impression on the ladies, but I am assured that the critics decided in favour of Garrick. My late friend Arthur Murphy told me, that when he wrote "The Grecian Daughter," he intended the part of Evander for Barry, to whom he had promised it, but to his surprise, Garrick signified that he would perform it himself. Murphy could not but rejoice that his play would have such powerful support, yet was embarrassed in thinking he should be obliged to forfeit his promise to Barry; there was, however, no resisting the power of the manager and his transcendent talents. Murphy therefore went to Barry, told him Garrick's intention, and began to apologize. Barry stopped him in a moment, and said, "Let him perform it, he will soon be tired, and resign it to me, and I shall be able to perform it much better from his example." Such was the opinion entertained by Barry of the advantages which he should derive from witnessing the excellence of Garrick in the part. Upon reflection, Garrick thought himself too old to perform a new part, particularly if the piece should have a run, and therefore resigned it to Barry. I was present the first night, and well remember the Evander of Barry, which corresponded with his infirmities at the time, and made a powerful impression on the audience. Mrs. Barry's excellence in Euphrasia considerably added to her reputation, as she was then in the prime of life, and in the full vigour of her talents.

applause, and the queen's countenance expressed an affable smile ; but the actress, the moment after she had uttered the words, was ready to sink with confusion.

The famous Earl of Dorset, Prior's patron, used to say he hated to be in the same room with a dull good-natured person, as there was no kicking him out of the company.

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

CAPABILITY BROWN. This gentleman may be numbered among the acquaintance of my family, but he flourished before my time. He was famous for his taste in ornamenting grounds, and acquired the title of Capability, as it was his custom in looking over parks, gardens, and their vicinities, to say that they displayed *capabilities*. He was undoubtedly a man of great taste, and had improved many noblemen's seats and situations that seemed *incapable* of deriving much advantage in point of prospect, and also in interior embellishments. He was at length so much celebrated, and his practice so successful,—he had, moreover, such a full reliance on his own genius, and his judgment was so much respected, that he made no scruple on all occasions to maintain his decided right to the reputation he had acquired. He was received into the best company, not only on account of his professional skill, but for his humour and promptitude at repartee.

One day when he was walking through the royal gardens with King George the Third, his majesty having asked his opinion of the arrangement of the grounds, Brown expressed his approbation of it, and said it must have been designed and executed by “the Brown of the time.” When the great Lord Chatham, disabled by the gout, was descending the stairs of St. James's Palace, Brown offered to assist his lordship and attend him to his carriage. As soon as the noble lord was seated, he said, “Thank you, Mr. Brown ; now, sir, go and adorn your country.” Brown instantly answered, “Go you, my lord, and save it.” An ingenious and happy return.

Having dined one day at the house of a nobleman, and the conversation turning upon gardening, some of the company spoke in favour of *clumps*. On departing with a nobleman, a double row of servants, like a “liveried army,” to use the words of Dr. Johnson, lined the passage in expectation of receiving what are called *vails* from each of the guests : Brown, casting his eyes on both sides of the passage where these toll-gatherers were assembled, “Don't you think, my lord,” said he, “that this *vista* ought to be *clumped* ?” This mode of levying contributions on visitors was carried to an almost incredible extent, till some persons of distinction united in forming a determination to abolish such a disgraceful taxation.



It is said that this practice prevailed to such a degree, even at the house of the great Lord Chesterfield, that when he invited Voltaire a second time to his table, the French wit in his answer declined the invitation, alleging that "his lordship's *ordinary* was too dear."

Another evil practice of servants to the higher orders, at that time, was carried to such a height that it wrought its own cure. It was usual at the old Italian Opera-house to allot a gallery to the footmen, that when their masters or mistresses had appointed the time to leave the theatre, their servants might be ready to attend. But these *livery-men* took it into their heads to become critics upon the performances, and delivered their comments in so tumultuous a manner, that the managers found it absolutely necessary to close the gallery against them, and to assign it to those only who paid for admission.

Just before the abolition of this *party-coloured* tribunal, a wag who was fond of music, but who had more wit than money, appeared at the gallery door, where the porter demanded the name of his master. The wag boldly answered, "I am the Lord Jehovah's servant," and was admitted, one of the door-keepers saying to the other, "I never heard of that man's master before, but suppose it is some scurvy Scotch lord or other."

When my *old* friend George Colman the *younger* had written his excellent comedy of "John Bull," and it was in rehearsal at Covent Garden theatre, the late Mr. Lewis, who performed the part of the Honourable Mr. Shuffleton, told me that the late Sir Charles Bamfield desired he would dress the character after his (Sir Charles's) usual mode of attire, and that he would endeavour to induce the author to change the name to any other that sounded like *Bamfield*, that the public might identify the character with him. The author wisely declined the suggested alteration, unwilling to incur the charge of personality. This was a strange ambition of Sir Charles, as the character is by no means an honourable one, but it is impossible to doubt the veracity of Mr. Lewis. Sir Charles Bamfield was held as the model of a fine gentleman by Dr. Wolcot, as he told me; so was Arthur Murphy by Dr. Johnson.

Mr. John Kemble used to relate many whimsical anecdotes of provincial actors whom he knew in the early part of his life. He said that an actor who was to perform the character of *Kent*, in the play of "King Lear," had dressed himself like a doctor, with a large grizzle-wig, having a walking-stick, which he held up to his nose, and a box under his arm. Being asked why he dressed the Earl of Kent in that manner, he said, "People mistake the character; he was not an earl, but a doctor. Does not Kent say, when the king draws his sword on him for speaking in favour of Cordelia, 'Do kill thy *physician*, Lear;' and when the king tells him to take his 'hated trunk from his dominions,' and Kent says, 'Now to new climes my old trunk I'll bear,' what could he mean but his *medicine-chest*, to practise in another country?"

The late Mr. Kemble was known to be of a convivial turn, and not in a hurry to leave a jovial party. He passed an evening with my

late friend Dr. Charles Burney, who kept an academy on the Hammersmith road, near to the three-mile-stone. Mr. Kemble remained here till five in the morning, when looking out of the window he saw a fish-cart on its way to Billingsgate, and having no other conveyance to town, he hailed the driver, and desired to be his passenger. The man readily consented, when Kemble adapted himself to the capacity of the man, who declared that he never met so pleasant a gentleman before. Instead of getting out, he desired the man to take him on to Billingsgate, where some of the people happened to know his person, and told it to the rest. The people left their business, gathered round him, and gave him a cheer. Mr. Pearce, then an eminent fish-monger in London, and an old friend of Macklin the actor, advanced towards Mr. Kemble, and offered to show him the place. Mr. Kemble remained some time, gratified the crowd with some humorous sallies, and then told Mr. Pearce that if he could get a coach he would take home a turbot for Mrs. Kemble. Mr. Pearce despatched one of his servants, who soon brought a coach, and Mr. Pearce took care to procure for him the best turbot the market afforded, and he went off amid the shouts of the people, which he returned with gracious salutations. Mr. Pearce has some years retired to Margate, and from him I learned the latter part of this anecdote.

Mr. Kemble resided some time on Turnham Green, during the summer season, where I had the pleasure of dining with him, and he read to me his romantic entertainment of "Lodoiska." There was a club at the Packhorse Tavern, consisting of the chief gentlemen of the neighbourhood, of which Dr. Wolcot, Mr. Jessé Foot, and Mr. Jerningham were admitted members. Mr. Kemble was invited to dine at this club, and Mr. George Colman happening to call on Mr. Kemble, he was invited also. They kept up the ball till most of the members, who had remained long beyond the usual time, entertained by the remarks of Kemble and the gayeties of my friend Colman, gradually withdrew; and Kemble and Colman did not break up till twelve o'clock the next day, having been left by themselves for many hours.

I have been more than once kept up by Mr. Kemble till four and five in the morning. This I remember particularly to have happened after his first performance of Octavian in "The Mountaineers." At length, however, he became quite temperate; and the last time I dined with him at his own house in Russell-street, Bloomsbury, I said to him, "Come, Johnny, we have not drunk a glass of wine together." Mrs. Kemble then said, "I am Johnny; Mr. Kemble does not drink wine, and I am ready for you." Mr. Kemble did not drink wine all the time, but was in such good spirits as to show that he had no occasion for such an auxiliary.

It has been often observed that a man will readily face danger and death in one form, and be afraid of it in another; and this remark was strikingly exemplified in Junot, one of Bonaparte's generals, who raised himself by his coolness when Bonaparte was besieging Toulon. He was writing something by order of the latter when a bombshell burst



near him; he promptly observed that he wanted sand, and it had come in due time. Yet I remember to have heard Sir Sydney Smith, speaking of Junot in the captain's room at the Admiralty, say, that when he was going on board the Tigre, Sir Sydney's ship, he was so frightened in mounting the ladder, that it was found necessary to take him on board through one of the port-holes.

Handel, when he first visited Ireland, in consequence of his disgust at the preference given to Bononcini in London, carried a letter of introduction to Dean Swift. When the dean heard that he was a musician and a German, he declined receiving him; but when his man added that the bearer of the letter was a great *genius*, "A genius and a German!" said Swift: "Oh, then, show him up immediately."

I had the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with Dr. Morell, well known for learning and piety, and who selected subjects from the Scriptures for Handel's oratorios. I heard him say that, one fine summer morning, he was roused out of bed at five o'clock by Handel, who came in his carriage a short distance from London. The doctor went to the window and spoke to Handel, who would not leave his carriage. Handel was at the time composing an oratorio. When the doctor asked him what he wanted, he said, "What de devil means de vord billow?" which was in the oratorio the doctor had written for him. The doctor, after laughing at so ludicrous a reason for disturbing him, told him that billow meant wave, a wave of the sea. "Oh, de vave," said Handel, and bade his coachman return, without addressing another word to the doctor.

Doctor Monsey told me that he had watched Quin the actor with attention, and sometimes thought he had evidently prepared and laid trains for his *bons-mots*, but that Lord Chesterfield's seemed to be elicited by the occasion, and were promptly uttered. The only weak thing he said he ever heard from his lordship was, when somebody in company said, "My lord, I drink your health," and his lordship answered, "Then how can I have it?" I presume here to differ with my friend Monsey, for the salutation was a vulgar custom, and his lordship, no doubt, intended to correct it, so that on this occasion he might rather be supposed to desert his usual politeness than to show any want of wit.

Reverse of fortune. Madame Mara, with whom I was intimately acquainted from her first arrival in this country as a great singer, told me that she saw a woman sweeping the streets at Berlin who had been the chief singer at the opera in Madrid. A very rich jewel had been offered for sale to the queen of Spain, who admired it very much, but declared she could not afford to purchase so valuable an article. The singer above mentioned bought it with the foolish vanity of showing that she was richer than the queen. This act was deemed so presumptuous and insolent, that the royal family withdrew all patronage from the Opera-house till this woman was dismissed. The common people also partook in the feelings of the court, and expressed their disgust whenever she appeared. She was, therefore, obliged to leave Madrid, but the story followed her wherever she

went, and though her vocal talents were great, she was everywhere so ill-received, that at length all her pecuniary resources were exhausted, and she sunk into the low condition in which Madame Mara saw her.

A few years ago a Mrs. Batiman forced herself upon public attention by an exhibition of her skill in fencing, in a contest with the celebrated Chevalier d'Eon, and also by performing at one of the London theatres,—I believe that in the Haymarket. Her acting was characterized by the boldness and confidence of vanity, rather than by any real comic merits. I saw this woman play "Bridget," in the comedy of "The Chapter of Accidents," and I never saw any performer, male or female, that seemed to manifest such self-possession, the obvious result of a settled conviction of conscious excellence. By her audacity and artifice, she entrapped Mr. Kemble into an epistolary correspondence, having offered herself for an engagement at Drury-lane theatre when he was manager. Not succeeding with Mr. Kemble, she solicited an interview with Mr. Sheridan, accusing Mr. Kemble of having encouraged her hopes of an engagement; and then of having abruptly rejected her. Mr. Sheridan granted the interview, but intimated that Mr. Kemble should be present, that he might hear both parties. She went to Mr. Sheridan's, and brought with her a number of papers, including Mr. Kemble's letters. She read them with great vehemence, and with a kind of theatrical deportment, in order to impress Mr. Sheridan with a high idea of her talents for the stage. She placed each of them on the table as she read it, and her feelings were so entirely engrossed by the business, that Mr. Kemble, who was present, contrived to take them, one by one, from her mass of papers, and throw them into the fire. When she had finished the relation of her case, Mr. Sheridan said that he had heard nothing in Mr. Kemble's letters which justified her in charging him with having deceived her; and that he was sure Mr. Kemble would not have given her any hope of an engagement without consulting him and receiving his sanction. She rose from her chair, hastily gathered her papers, without missing the letters, and left the room in a violent passion.

Mr. Kemble assured me the letters contained nothing but the courtesy due to a female, and that he only withdrew and destroyed them because he did not like to have them remain in the hands of so violent and vindictive a woman. He never knew whether she missed the letters, as he never heard from her again. What finally became of her I know not, but I heard that poor Chevalier D'Eon, after having distinguished himself as a politician and an historian, disgraced his character by exhibiting himself with this woman in fencing matches at several provincial towns. The mysterious character of D'Eon, and his appearance both as a male and female in this country and in many parts of Europe, rendered him a subject of general conversation, insomuch that policies were opened to ascertain his sex, while he appeared in male and female attire.

D'Eon, before the revolution, had assumed the male attire, but by an order of the French court, from which it is understood he received



a pension, he was compelled to appear again like a woman, as originally directed by the French government, for reasons which have never been satisfactorily developed.

I was assured by a very old friend of my father, who was well acquainted with D'Eon in the earlier part of the time when he appeared in male attire, and was connected with an agency from France, that his manners were captivating, and that he might have married most advantageously, as several ladies of good families, and with large fortunes, had made overtures to him at country-seats where he visited, and that on all such occasions he immediately left the house. Hence it was inferred he quitted the place on account of his being really of the female sex. It is difficult to discover what were his real motives for retaining the female attire after the destruction of the monarchy in France, and when he ceased to have any connexion with that country.

I met the chevalier in his advanced life at the late Mr. Angelo's, in Carlisle-street, Soho, and if his manners had been once so captivating, they had undergone a great alteration, for though he was dressed as a woman, he spoke and acted with all the roughness of a veteran soldier. From all I have heard of D'Eon, he must have been a very intelligent man, full of anecdote and fertile in conversation; and I cannot but repeat my regret, that a character who had made so conspicuous a figure, should ever have been reduced to derive a precarious support from a public exhibition of his talents in fencing with a woman. What were his means for subsistence till his death, is not, and perhaps never will be known; but his name and extraordinary appearance will never be forgotten.

It is probable that before the destruction of the French monarchy he had a pension from France; and not improbable that the British government, which made so magnificent a provision for General Paoli, had allotted some support to the Chevalier D'Eon. It appears somewhat strange, that nothing was also done for poor Theodore, who had actually been elected King of Corsica by the people, and who had nearly died in a jail in this country, while Paoli was so well provided for, who certainly had not equal pretensions. Paoli lived almost like a nobleman in this country; and it would be difficult to discover why he was so bountifully patronised, though, as a man who had struggled hard for the deliverance of his country, it was suitable to the character of Great Britain to afford him a liberal asylum.

I knew a little of Paoli, and passed two evenings with him at Mr. Cosway's, in Stratford Place. In the first evening there was a very large party, and some fine musical performances, but Mrs. Abington and Paoli seemed not to be interested by those entertainments, and sat on a sofa by the fire. As I knew that I could often hear music, and rarely see such a man as Paoli, I joined them near the sofa, and took a part in their conversation. Mrs. Abington, whom I had previously known, was brisk, smart, and intelligent. She endeavoured to draw out Paoli, but he seemed more inclined to

listen, and though he had lived so long in the country, he knew so little of our language that it was not very easy to understand him. The second evening nobody was present but Mr. and Mrs. Cosway, General Paoli, and myself. Paoli displayed the same silent manner, which did not appear to me to be an habitual or intentional reserve, but rather a reluctance to speak, on account of the difficulty which he felt of making himself fully understood. Mrs. Cosway was the life of the conversation, and by her attention to Paoli, she gave him a fair opportunity of coming forward with advantage; yet, though I listened with an anxious desire to hear the sentiments and opinion of a person who had excited so much notice in the world, I heard nothing from him, notwithstanding various topics were introduced, that appeared to me to be worth treasuring in my memory. I had heard from the Boswells, father and son, of the elegance of his manners, but it appeared to be of the privative kind, and such as might be expected from any modest man who was fearful of giving offence.

Paoli, during the revolutionary government in France, went to Paris, and paid homage to the usurping powers. He then proceeded to Corsica, but did not experience a very encouraging reception, and, therefore, wisely returned to this country, where he received the same liberal allowance, and passed the remainder of his life in studious ease and limited intercourse with society. Whether he had any acquaintance with my friend Colonel Frederick, the son of Theodore, I know not; but Frederick did not seem to hold him in much respect, appearing rather to consider him as a man who had been fortunately raised into unmerited distinction; and I never had reason to believe that Frederick was capable of detraction.

Paoli in person altogether bore a stronger resemblance to the late celebrated Dr. Herschel than I ever saw between any other two individuals. With Dr. Herschel I once passed great part of an evening at the hospitable mansion of the late Mr. Thompson, in Grosvenor-square, and I was much struck with the unaffected modesty of a gentleman so justly esteemed for his astronomical discoveries.

The first Lord Lyttelton was very absent in company, and when he fell into a river by the oversetting of a boat, at Hagley, it was said of him that he had "sunk twice before he recollected he could swim." Mr. Jerningham told me, that dining one day with his lordship, the earl pointed to a particular dish, and asked to be helped of it, calling it, however, by a name very different from what the dish contained. A gentleman was going to tell him of his mistake. "Never mind," whispered another of the party; "help him to what he asked for, and he will suppose it is what he wanted."

Dr. Johnson, on hearing a Mr. Dalrymple, at the table of Sir Joshua Reynolds, speaking with contempt of Racine, the French poet, expressed a high opinion of Racine. Mr. Dalrymple, in answer, said, "Why, doctor, I heard you say that you had never read Racine, how then can you be able to judge of his merit?" The doctor, after giving his body the usual meditative roll, replied, "Well, sir, I never did read Racine, but the opinion of all Europe is in his favour, and



surely I may venture to prefer that opinion to the judgment of Mr. Dalrymple." Mr. Jerningham dined with Sir Joshua that day, and told me the story.

Arthur Murphy, whose mind was chiefly occupied by dramatic subjects, after he became a barrister, dining one Sunday at the chaplain's table, St. James's Palace, being too early, strolled into the Chapel Royal during the service, and desiring a seat, he thus addressed one of the attendants on the pews: "Here, *boxkeeper*, open this *box*."

The great Lord Chatham, speaking of a statesman of his time who was in place, said, "That man would not be honest if he could, and could not if he would."

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

As I have had much intercourse with the theatrical world, and intend to notice such celebrated actors as have quitted the stage of life, it would be strange indeed, if, having had the pleasure of seeing the performances of Mr. Garrick, I should lightly pass over his name in my humble records. I shall not enter into his history, as it is to be found in innumerable dramatic annals, and particularly in those of Mr. Davies and Mr. Murphy. It would be presumptuous in me to attempt to delineate his excellence as an actor, even if I were capable of paying a due tribute to his genius, after the testimonies of the chief literati and best judges of the time. I shall merely relate a few anecdotes, in addition to those already scattered through these records, which I learned from private channels; and content myself with saying, that though I saw him in my early days, I witnessed his excellence in such a variety of characters, that he made a strong impression on my mind, and I remember enough of his acting to be able to compare him with all his successors in every one of those characters, and have never seen in the best of them any thing like equal merit. In fact, in my humble opinion, he shone as much as an actor as his favourite Shakspeare does as a dramatic poet.

My old friend Dr. Monsey was for many years in the closest intimacy with Garrick, and though the occasion of their separation was never removed, they must mutually have regretted the dissolution of their friendship. Garrick was fond of playing tricks, but in them he had an eye to his art. Dr. Monsey had often beerd with him when he indulged himself in these pranks, and sometimes thought himself in danger of suffering by the consequences of his sportive levity. Dr. Monsey told me, that he once had occasion to accompany Garrick and Mr. Windham of Norfolk, father of the late Mr. Windham the statesman, into the city. On their return, Garrick suddenly left them at the top of Ludgate Hill, and walking into the middle of the street,

looked upwards, and repeated several times to himself, "I never saw two before." The strange appearance of a man in this situation talking to himself, naturally attracted some persons towards him, more followed, and at length a great crowd was collected round him. Several persons asked him what he saw. He made no answer, but repeated the same words. A man then observed that the gentleman must see two storks, as they are rarely if ever seen in pairs. This observation contented the multitude, till another said, "Well, but who sees one besides the gentleman?" Monsey, for fear of getting into a scrape, moved off, lest he should be taken for a confederate to make people fools ; but I now remember that Mr. Windham, who, like his son, was a good boxer, determined to witness the end of this whimsical freak. Garrick affected an insane stare, cast his eyes around the multitude, and afterward declared that from the various expression in the faces of the people, and their gestures, he had derived hints that served him in his profession.

Another time, when Garrick was with Monsey, at the joyful sound of twelve at noon, a great many boys poured out of school. Garrick selected one whom he accused of having treated another cruelly who stood near him. The boy declared that he had not been ill-treated ; and Garrick then scolded the other still more, affecting to think how little he deserved the generosity of the boy who sought to excuse him by a falsehood. The boys were left in a state of consternation by Garrick's terrific demeanour and piercing eye ; and he told Monsey that he derived much advantage from observing their various emotions.

While he was walking with Monsey on another occasion, he saw a ticket-porter going before them at a brisk pace, and humming a tune. They were then at old Somerset House. "I'll get a crowd around that man," said Garrick, "before he reaches Temple Bar." He then advanced before the man, turned his head, and gave him a piercing look. The man's gayety was checked in a moment, he kept his eye on Garrick, who stopped at an apple-stall till the man came near, then gave him another penetrating glance, and went immediately on. The man began to look if there was any thing strange about him that attracted the gentleman's notice, and, as Garrick repeated the same expedient, turned himself in all directions, and pulled off his wig, to see if any thing ridiculous was attached to him. By this time, the restless anxiety of the man excited the notice of the passengers, and Garrick effected his purpose of gathering a crowd round the porter before he reached Temple Bar.

Dr. Monsey said that he once was in danger of receiving a severe blow in consequence of one of Garrick's vagaries of a similar kind. They had dined at Garrick's house in Southampton-street, Covent Garden, and had taken a boat in order to go in the evening to Vauxhall. A smart-looking young waterman stood on the strand at Hungerford Stairs. As soon as they were seated in their boat, Garrick addressed the young waterman in the following manner : "Are you not ashamed to dress so smart, and appear so gay, when you know that your poor mother is in great distress, and you have not the heart



to allow her more than threepence a week?" The young man turned his head to see if anybody was near to whom the words might apply, and, seeing none, he took up a brickbat and threw it very near Garrick's boat, and continued to aim stones at him. Garrick's boatman pulled hard to get out of the way of this missile hostility, or Monsey said they might have otherwise suffered a serious injury.

It may be thought that these wanton sports were unworthy of such a man, but allowance is to be made for a great genius that might wish for some relaxation after the toils of acting and the troubles of theatrical management. Garrick's merit as an actor has been so often and so well described by the chief men of his day, that I shall say no more on the subject, except to refer the reader to my friend Arthur Murphy's life of him, which, though a work not equal to what might be expected from him if written at an earlier period, takes a liberal and masterly view of Garrick in his several capacities as actor, author, manager, and private gentleman.

Garrick has been accused of avarice, but he should rather have been esteemed for prudence and economy, as Dr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy both declared, that to their knowledge he never was wanting in private benevolence.

Mrs. Clive was eminent as an actress on the London stage before Garrick appeared, and, as his blaze of excellence threw all others into comparative insignificance, she never forgave him, and took every opportunity of venting her spleen. She was coarse, rude, and violent in her temper, and spared nobody. One night, as Garrick was performing "King Lear," she stood behind the scenes to observe him, and in spite of the roughness of her nature, was so deeply affected that she sobbed one minute and abused him the next, and at length, overcome by his pathetic touches, she hurried from the place with the following extraordinary tribute to the universality of his powers: "D—n him! I believe he could act a *gridiron*."

It is said also that one night when he was performing "Macbeth," and the murderer entered the banquet scene, Garrick looked at him with such an expressive countenance, and uttered with such energy, "There's blood upon thy face," that the actor said, "Is there, by G—?" instead of "'Tis Banquo's then;" thinking, as he afterward acknowledged, that he had broken a blood-vessel.

Dr. Wolcot, and there could not be a better judge, considered Garrick perfect in comedy, and that if ever he was at fault in tragedy, it was because the language and sentiments of the tragic drama were generally unnatural. Garrick placed the works of Otway next to those of Shakspeare in his library, and when Monsey asked him the reason, he said, "Because I think that, next to our unrivalled bard, he had more command over the passions than all other dramatic poets.

My father, who saw him perform "King Richard" on the first night of his appearance at Goodman's Fields, told me that the audience were particularly struck with his manner of throwing away the book when the lord mayor and aldermen had retired, as it mani-

fested a spirit totally different from the solemn dignity which characterized the former old school, and which his natural acting wholly overturned.

Garrick was once present when my father was going to perform an operation on the cataract; and though the patient was timid and fearful, he was entertained so much by Garrick's humour, that he underwent the operation with great fortitude, and was rewarded by its success.

Garrick's excellence in "Leon" was universally admitted, but he was anxious to perform the part of the "Copper Captain," in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife," and he several times rehearsed it for that purpose; but there is a traditional laugh introduced, which he never could execute to his own satisfaction, and, therefore, kept to "Leon," in which character he was admirable, having an opportunity of showing how well he could represent timid simplicity with a sly mixture of archness in the early scenes of the character, and afterward assert the claims of the husband with spirit, energy, and grandeur. Why this traditional laugh should be introduced, or thought essential to the part, it is difficult to say; and still more difficult to conceive that it should have exceeded the powers of Garrick, who was an admirable imitator. The "Copper Captain" is to laugh when he finds that "Estifania" had imposed his false jewels on the usurer, but surely that was no cause for such elaborate merriment as is generally exhibited in the part. If Garrick failed in attempting it, this was not the case with Woodward, King, and Lewis, all of whom I have seen in the part, and the laughter was natural and effective in all, though it was entirely different in each.

Though Garrick felt strongly himself, yet he was always able to control his feelings, and could reserve them for future indulgence. An instance of this self-command occurred when a young candidate for the stage addressed him, and requested to be heard in the celebrated soliloquy in "Hamlet." The young man had, unfortunately, an impediment in his speech, and stammered at the beginning. Garrick expressed his surprise that, with such an impediment, he should think of being a public speaker in any respect. The candidate assured him that if he once surmounted the difficulty at the beginning, he could then go smoothly on. Garrick dismissed the young man with courtesy, reserving the merriment that such an incident might naturally excite till he could give way to it without wounding the feelings of another, and then freely indulged in it.

I will now mention a circumstance that manifests the irresistible power of his acting. The late Mr. Farington, a member of the Royal Academy, and a particular friend of mine, told me that he had not an opportunity of seeing Garrick act till his last season. Finding that he was announced for "Hamlet," Mr. Farington went early to the theatre, and obtained a seat in the second row in the pit. He beheld with indifference all that passed in the play previous to the entrance of "Hamlet" with the royal court. He then bent forward with eagerness, and directed all his attention to Garrick. Observing



his painted face, which but ill concealed the effects of time, his bulky form and high-heeled shoes to raise his figure, Mr. Farington drew back with disappointment and dejection, thinking that a man who at an earlier period might fully deserve all his celebrity, was going to expose himself in the attempt to perform a character for which, from age, he was totally unfit. At length Garrick began to speak in answer to the king. Mr. Farington then resumed his attention; and such was the truth, simplicity, and feeling with which the great actor spoke and acted, that my friend declared he lost sight of Garrick's age, bulk, and high-heeled shoes, and saw nothing but the "Hamlet" which the author had designed. From that time, Mr. Farington constantly attended Garrick's performances, and said that he manifested equal excellence in all.

I can add to this testimony a still higher authority in favour of Garrick's extraordinary merit as an actor. Speaking of Garrick once when the subject of acting was introduced in company with Mrs. Siddons, I observed, so long a time had passed since she saw him act, that, perhaps, she had forgotten him; on which she said emphatically, it was impossible to forget him. Another time I told her that Mr. Sheridan had declared Garrick's "Richard" to be very fine, but did not think it terrible enough. "God bless me!" said she, "what could be more terrible?" She then informed me, that when she was rehearsing the part of "Lady Anne" to his "Richard," he desired her, as he drew her from the couch, to follow him step by step, for otherwise he should be obliged to turn his face from the audience, and he acted much with his features. Mrs. Siddons promised to attend to his desire, but assured me there was such an expression in his acting that it entirely overcame her, and she was obliged to pause, when he gave her such a look of reprehension as she never could recollect without terror. She expressed her regret that she had only seen him in two characters, except when she acted "Lady Anne" with him,—and those characters were "Lear" and "Ranger;" that his "Lear" was tremendous, and his "Ranger" delightful. Nothing need be added to the testimony of one of the greatest ornaments of the stage which, perhaps, ever appeared since the origin of the drama, and whom, perhaps, it is impossible to surpass in theatrical excellence.

I cannot give a higher idea of the estimation in which Garrick's talents, wit, and humour were held, than by stating that he was intimate with the great Lord Mansfield, the great Lord Camden, and the great Earl of Chatham, as well as with the highest nobility and the most distinguished literary characters of his time. It is strange, but true, as he assured Dr. Monsey, that he never was in company with Dr. Johnson but he felt awe from the recollection that the doctor had once been his schoolmaster, though for thirty years he was accustomed to face multitudes in the theatres, and had been introduced to persons of the highest rank in this and other countries.

As an author Garrick appears to great advantage. His share in the comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage" was considerable, and highly to the credit of his genius as a dramatic writer, as it has been

understood that the entire character of Lord Ogleby was his composition. His farces are all excellent, and admirably calculated for dramatic effect. His prologues and epilogues are more in number and equal to those of any other writer of similar productions. There is great merit in his poem on the death of Mr. Pelham, and his epigrams are all neat and well pointed.

It has been generally supposed that, because he lived some time with Mrs. Woffington, he wrote those lines on her beginning with

“Once more I'll tune the vocal shell,”

each stanza ending with “My Peggy;” but they were written by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and are to be found in his works as published by Lord Holland.

I have been assured by the late Sir Henry Bate Dudley, that Garrick's table was always plentiful, elegant, and conducted with the true spirit of hospitality. Sir Henry was intimate with Garrick, and well knew himself how to entertain with spirit and elegance.

Garrick, as I was assured by Dr. Monsey, peculiarly excelled in relating a humorous story. To one in particular, though of a trifling nature, I am told he gave irresistible effect. A man named Jones had undertaken to eat a bushel of beans with a proportionable quantity of bacon. A vast crowd assembled before the front of a public house at Kensington Gravel-pits, and Garrick happened to be present. The crowd were there a long time before the man appeared, and he came forward without his coat, and his shirt-sleeves tied with red ribands. He was well received, and a large dish of boiled beans with a huge lump of bacon was placed before him; he began to eat with vigour, but at length was so slow in his progress that the people became impatient. He suddenly arose, ran into the house, and escaped through a back door. The mob then broke every window in the house, tore up all the benches, and severely ill-treated the landlord and his wife. Garrick's imitation of the cries of the mob before the man appeared; the continual noise of “Jones,” and “Beans,” to bring him forward; his imitation of the man, and description of the whole event, were exquisitely diverting.

---

## CHAPTER XXIX.

**BARRY.** This actor was the great competitor of Garrick when they were both in the meridian of their fame, but as Barry was in the decline of life and very infirm when I saw him perform, it would not become me to enter into a criticism of his merits, compared with his great and unrivalled contemporary. Infirm as Barry was, there were majestic remains in his person and manner. His two great



parts were Othello and Romeo, but he had resigned both of those characters before my time. I saw him perform King Lear after I had seen Garrick perform the same character, but he appeared to me to be feeble by comparison.

Barry was originally a silversmith, and kept a shop in Dublin before he was struck with theatrical ambition. He was handsome, tall, and well-made, but not having acquired the Chesterfield graces, it is said that the Prince of Wales, the father of George the Third, advised him to take a few lessons from a dancing-master who was patronised by his royal highness, and Barry was wise enough to profit by the condescending recommendation. I was told by a friend of Barry, who knew him well, that he excelled in telling Irish stories, of which he had a great abundance. The same gentleman informed me that as Barry, from his previous employment and habits, had not the advantage of much education, he was unable to mingle in literary conversation, but that whenever such topics occurred, he always contrived, with the most ingenious address, to shift the discourse to subjects upon which he was competent to enter, so that his deficiency was effectually concealed from all but those who were intimately acquainted with his origin and pursuits. He was said to be remarkably good-tempered and ready to do kind offices. I saw him perform Timon of Athens, Horatio in "The Fair Penitent," and Lord Hastings in "Jane Shore." I well remember the grandeur of his deportment, even in the midst of his infirmities. In the scene preceding the removal of Hastings for execution, while taking leave of Alicia, I never witnessed any thing more impressive, and I remember my agitation was so great that I could hardly keep my seat. He peculiarly excelled in delivering a soliloquy, and, instead of appearing to address an audience, he walked as if venting his thoughts and feelings by himself. He was a great actor, though not a Garrick.

Mrs. CRAWFORD. This actress, the widow of the eminent actor whom I have just mentioned, was Mrs. Dancer when I first saw her. I was not able to form any judgment of her merits. She was at that period brought from Dublin by Barry, who was then married, but on the death of his wife she became Mrs. Barry.

It is a strong proof of the good-nature of Mrs. Barry that she could subdue her resentment, after such an unprovoked and unmerited insult as that passed on her by Mr. Kelly. Mrs. Barry's voice was sometimes harsh, but generally musical, and some of her tones were so tender that it was impossible to resist them. It was usual with her when she had delivered any impassioned speech, to be inattentive to *dumb-show*, and to appear unconcerned in the scene; but when she resumed her attention to the character, she entirely recovered her ground, and excited as warm a sympathy as if she had not displayed a momentary lapse. Her Rosalind was the most perfect representation of the character that, in my opinion, I had ever witnessed. It was tender, animated, and playful to the highest degree. She gave the cuckoo song with admirable humour. Her Cordelia was irresistibly affecting, and so was the whole round of her

tragic characters. In the "Irish Widow" her comic powers were not less effective.

After her marriage with Mr. Crawford, who was young enough to be her son, her talents evidently declined; the consequence, according to report, of her domestic vexations. It was, indeed, an imprudent union. I was present at the first meeting of Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Yates on the stage; and the emulative efforts of both, in Alicia and Jane Shore, afforded the most gratifying result to the audience. Never was there a greater struggle for admission than on that occasion. The neighbouring streets were as much thronged as on any royal visit to the theatre. Mrs. Barry held forth a lesson to people to watch over their manners as well as their conduct; for she who was once so elegant in her deportment, became rough and coarse, and her person also was so much impaired, that in her latter days she had the appearance of an old man rather than one of the softer sex.

When Mr. Stephen Kemble had the management of the Edinburgh theatre, he commissioned me to offer her handsome terms to play a few nights at Edinburgh, about the time of Christmas; but she declined the proposal, alleging that she could not encounter a winter in Scotland, and shrugging up her shoulders with the anticipation of cold just in such a manner as might be expected from the lower order of women, exhibiting altogether a pitiable degeneracy of demeanour.

Mrs. Yates appeared to me to be the most commanding and dignified woman I had ever seen, previous to the appearance of Mrs. Siddons. She played to perfection Medea, Margaret of Anjou, the Duchess of Braganza, and characters of a similar description. I do not think she was qualified either for parts of tenderness or for comedy. I never happened to be in company with her, but have heard that her manners were easy and attractive.

With Mr. Yates I was well acquainted. When I knew him, he had reached a very advanced age, but he had good health and all the spirit of youth. I remember dining with him at the late Mr. Lewis Weltje's, on Hammersmith Mall, when he told us many theatrical anecdotes, and actually gave some turns of a hornpipe after dinner. He said he was in the theatrical company at Ipswich when Garrick first appeared on the stage in that town, under the name of Liddel, in the character of Aboan, in the play of "Oroonoko."

Yates was one of those actors who think for themselves and disregard all traditionary gestures and manners. When he had a part to act, he immediately endeavoured to discover some person whose deportment and disposition resembled it, or searched his memory for a former model. Such was his theory, as I learned from him. He was not so sportive as Parsons, but he was more correct and characteristic. He performed a part in Cumberland's tragedy of "The Mysterious Father" in so unaffected a manner, and with such an exact conformity to life, that it was the most perfect delusion I ever beheld on the stage in characters of the familiar drama.



Churchill has been too severe on him in his "Rosciad," in representing him as only fit for clowns and such parts; for though not qualified to perform polished characters, yet he gave those in middle life with correctness, force, and impressive effect. His Sir John Restless and his Major Oakley will, perhaps, never be excelled. But the part for which he was chiefly celebrated was Shakspeare's Lance with his dog. He was intelligent, shrewd, and prudent, and lived always like a liberal man in his domestic character.

My father was always fond of the drama, and became acquainted with many of the actors, of some of whom he used to take tickets for their benefits. The first whom I remember that used to visit our house in Hatton Garden, was Mr. Ackman, who was but an inferior performer, though an intelligent and worthy man. He is mentioned by Churchill in his "Rosciad," very slightly indeed, yet the very circumstance of his introduction in that poem proves that he was not wholly below critical notice. There was always good sense in his performances, though not animated by genius, but his figure was by no means calculated for heroic characters, whatever his talents might have been.

There was one character in which he distinguished himself, and that was Kate Matchlock in the comedy of "The Funeral, or Grief A-la-mode." He never associated with the lower actors in public-houses, but kept up a connexion with respectable tradesmen, gentlemen of the law, and medical men. He lived in chambers in Gray's Inn, where he was found dead one morning on the stairs, having died in a fit of apoplexy. He was much regretted by his professional brethren and many friends.

The next of the theatrical fraternity who used to frequent my father's house was Mr. Hurst. He had been a country manager, but at length made his way to Drury-lane theatre during the management of Garrick. Hurst was a tall, stout man, with a great deal of sarcastic humour in private life. He was a favourite of the ladies in the earlier part of his engagement at Drury-lane theatre, but his method of courtship, as far as I can recollect, was not such as would be likely to be equally successful with the fair sex of the present times, whose manners in general are more refined, and their knowledge more enlarged, than they were at the time alluded to. He used to call a young lady that pleased him "a lovely villain," "a dear rascal," and similar designations. He used to romp with them and disorder their hair, pulling out their curls, and treating them altogether with a kind of rustic familiarity.\* I was acquainted with one young lady, a woman of good sense, of taste, and fond of reading, who was captivated by this strange, forward, rough courtship, and would have married him if her father had not interfered.

\* This manner of wooing, however, seems to give some support to Waller's opinion:—

—Women, born to be controll'd,  
Stoop to the forward and the bold.

Hurst was an actor quite of the ordinary stamp, but I remember seeing him perform *Scioto*, for his own benefit, at Drury-lane theatre, which he played with great feeling, and he seemed to make a strong impression on the audience. He was a member of the Bucks' Lodge, perhaps now extinct, and the members, I recollect, filled the front of the boxes, in all their official parade and dignity. Having numerous connexions, and finding his salary not adequate to support the rank to which he aspired, he became a brandy merchant.

While he was performing one of the characters in "The Rehearsal," soon after he had assumed this business, Garrick, who, in representing Bayes, usually introduced some temporary or personal joke, on one occasion thus addressed Hurst: "Sir," said he, "you are an actor, and I understand a brandy-merchant; now, sir, let me advise you to put less spirit in your liquor and more in your acting, and you will preserve the health of your friends, and be more approved by the public." This sally was well received, and, as Garrick intended, augmented his customers. After Garrick resigned the management of Drury-lane theatre, Hurst, as I understood, went to Liverpool, where he was engaged as a performer, but age and infirmities came upon him, and he relinquished the theatrical profession. An unlucky circumstance once occurred to him, which naturally excited laughter among the audience. He had a row of false teeth, which, while he was delivering some emphatic passage on the stage, flew from his mouth, and he became inarticulate till they were restored to their former situation.

When Hurst was first engaged at Drury-lane theatre, he was for some time kept in the background, and, therefore, having some literary friend concerned in a newspaper, a paragraph appeared, reprehending the manager for not giving suitable encouragement to his talents. Garrick, who was very sensitive on all such occasions, sent to him, and sarcastically complimented him on his literary talents. Hurst assured him that he was not the author, and imputed the article to some officious friend. Garrick, who had not a resentful mind, easily overlooked the offence, brought the actor more forward, and occasionally invited him to Hampton.

It is said that a relation of Hurst died in the East Indies, and bequeathed a considerable sum to him. His mind had become imbecile, and he employed the chief part of this property in purchasing dresses for the stage, as if he had resolved upon resuming the management of a theatre; and if "the fell sergeant" had not carried him off before it was all gone, he might have been reduced to a precarious dependance on his brethren of the sock and buskin. Such was the fate of my father's old acquaintance. Hurst had one peculiarity in his theatrical delivery. Actors in general drop their voices at the close of a sentence, but he uniformly ended every sentence with the rising inflection—a circumstance somewhat strange, as the other practice seems to operate by a sort of contagion among theatrical performers of either sex.

The next whom I remember of my father's theatrical friends, but



the remembrance is faint, was Mr. Adam Hallam. This actor, who was a well-educated man, and a perfect gentleman in his deportment, possessed constant good spirits and a lively humour. He is mentioned in Davies's "Miscellanies" as so good an imitator of the deportment of the celebrated Wilks, the contemporary of Betterton, Booth, and Cibber, that Rich was tempted to engage him on a large salary for seven years, at the end of which he was dismissed, and quitted the stage. He, however, was allowed the privilege of issuing tickets every season for his benefit, half of which was for the theatre and half for himself. This practice is still in use, I believe, at both the London theatres.

As Mr. Hallam derived his chief support from this resource, it is probable that he had many friends. He is mentioned with respect and gratitude by Mrs. Clarke in her own "Memoirs," as having received great kindness from him in the hour of adversity. Mrs. Clarke was the youngest daughter of Colley Cibber. She was married to Mr. Clarke, one of the musicians of the theatre. Her life was dissipated, if not profligate, and she was banished from the parental roof. On the death of her husband, she became very much embarrassed, and to protect herself from creditors, during the time that marriages were easily performed at the Fleet prison, she gave a small sum to an old fisherman, who stood at a stall in Fleet-market, to marry her. She obtained a certificate of the marriage, and quitted her husband, who never saw her again. My father remembered the man, who was old and little better than an idiot, whom it would have been madness to trouble for the debts of his wife.

Mr. Hallam translated the "Beggars' Opera" into French, and carried it to Paris, in hopes of procuring a representation of it on the French stage, but the manager would not consent, unless he agreed that the hero of the piece should be hanged. Mr. Hallam, from respect for the memory of Gay, would not suffer the piece to be altered. Mr. Davies says, that the translation was afterward represented in the Haymarket theatre with some success. Hallam was the uncle of Mrs. Mattocks, formerly Miss Hallam, a popular comic actress, with whom I was well acquainted, and who seemed to be much gratified when I told her that I recollected her uncle in my early days.

The next of my father's theatrical friends was Mr. David Ross, who was related to an ancient family in Scotland, at the head of whom, in his time, was Sir Walter Ross. Ross had the reputation of being a good actor in tragedy, and in both the livelier and graver parts of comedy. I have seen him in *King Lear* and *Othello*, and if I could not at that time judge of his merit, I remember at least that he was much applauded in both characters. He was admired, I understand, in the character of *Wellbred* in "Every Man in his Humour," and I have good reason to believe that Colley Cibber told him he was the best *Young Bevil*, in "The Conscious Lovers," that he had seen since the days of *Barton Booth*.

Ross was Master of the Revels in Scotland, and the proprietor of

the Edinburgh theatre, with which he parted, as it was said, without adequate security. He was very fond of the pleasures of the table, and ate himself into so unseemly a shape, that he could not procure a situation on the London boards. I retained my acquaintance with him after the death of his wife, and as long as he remained in London. His wife was the celebrated Fanny Murray, who, according to the general estimation, was the greatest *purchaseable* beauty of her day. At the time I became acquainted with her, when visiting her husband, with whom I used to play at backgammon, her beauty was more than on the wane, but she had pleasing features and an agreeable countenance. I remember her showing me a miniature, representing a lady of exquisite beauty, painted, I believe, in enamel. She asked if I knew the original of that portrait; and though her face must have undergone much alteration, yet I could trace the resemblance, and she seemed to be much gratified in finding that I knew it to be a portrait of herself.

There was nothing in her manner or conversation that in the slightest degree indicated the free life from which she had been rescued by marriage. Whatever her face might have been, her form was short, and by no means elegant. When Ross married her, he did so from motives of real affection, for he was then in possession of the public favour, and had a good salary at the theatre. She was certainly not a suitable companion for Ross, whose conversation more resembled the dialogue of Congreve's wits than that of any other person I ever knew. He also excelled in telling a humorous story.

On the death of his wife, being unable to obtain a theatrical engagement, he became embarrassed in his circumstances. It was reported that, as Fanny Murray had been originally seduced by one of the noble house of Spencer, she received from a branch of that family an annuity of 200*l*. This allowance, of course, ceased at her death. Poor Ross therefore represented his situation to the head of that family, and was allowed a moiety of the annuity for the remainder of his life. I never certainly heard of his death, or where it happened, but was told that he died in the infirmary at York. Such, indeed, was probably the end of my old friend, after having represented kings, heroes, lovers, and all the illustrious characters of the drama, even during the reign of Garrick.

He held the powers of Garrick in the highest estimation; and when I once asked which he thought was Garrick's chief performance, he said that in his opinion it was Hamlet. As a proof of the veneration in which he held the genius of Garrick, he prided himself on having been born on the same day in the same month, sixteen years after that unrivalled ornament of the stage, and on having been christened by the name of David.

It may not be improper to mention in honour of his wife, that, just before the marriage ceremony was performed, the officiating priest desired the bride to withdraw with him for a few minutes into the vestry-room. She consented, and he, delicately but solemnly alluding to her past life, told her that marriage was an awful and a sacred tie,



and that unless she had determined to forsake all others and cleave only to her future husband, she would plunge herself into dreadful guilt by entering into the holy state. She appeared to be much affected at his doubts, but mildly assured him that it was her fixed resolution to lead a new life, and thereby endeavour to atone for former errors. The ceremony was then performed, and from that moment her conduct was unimpeached, and probably unimpeachable.

Poor Ross, when his age and size prevented his being reinstated on the London boards, used to vent his complaints against the managers in homely but emphatic terms. I remember some of his repining language, which was as follows: "They (the managers) will not let me follow my business, work at my trade, and earn my bread." The truth is, that he was too indulgent to his appetite.

Churchill says of him, too justly, in the "Rosciad:—"

Ross, a misfortune that we often meet,  
Was fast asleep at fair Statira's feet;  
Statira, with her hero to agree,  
Stood on her feet as fast asleep as he.

I remember to have asked him who was the Statira alluded to, and he said that he did not recollect, but believed it was Mrs. Bellamy.

Ross was, indeed, too apt to slumber over some scenes, and upon one occasion received such a rough rebuke from the audience as roused him into active exertion, and he then threw out such striking and impressive beauties that censure was immediately converted into the warmest approbation. He was a very tardy paymaster, and at one time when he was in arrears with his laundress, and she had brought his linen, she declared she would not leave it till he paid her what was her due. The footman told his master what she said, when he desired her to be shown up-stairs. She was told to place her basket on the ground, and Ross drew it near the bed-room door. He examined the linen to see if it was right, taking his shirts and other articles one by one, and throwing them upon the bed. When he had emptied the basket and locked the door, "Now, madam," said he, "for your impudent speech I shall not pay you till I please." The poor woman, mortified to be thus overreached and disappointed, burst into tears; and then Ross had the good-nature to relent and pay her demand. If she had acted otherwise, it is probable the pay-day would have been adjourned *sine die*.

I do not remember to have seen more than one portrait of Ross, though I have a faint notion that there is a print of him in the character of *Comus*. The portrait I allude to was a whole-length of him painted by Zoffani, of the same size as his admirable dramatic portraits of Garrick, Foote, Palmer, &c. I went to see it at the house of the artist, by Ross's desire. He is represented in the character of Hamlet. It is a very correct likeness both of his figure and features. He told me that it was painted for Sir Walter Ross, the head of his family, and was to be sent to Scotland. To my surprise, I saw this identical picture in the dramatic gallery of Mr. Matthews, the comic actor, on

the Highgate road. I naturally asked Mr. Matthews how he became possessed of it; and he told me that he bought it of Mr. Rock, a good representative of low Irish parts at Covent Garden theatre, and who was afterward engaged in Scotland.

The last time I saw Ross perform was in the character of Strickland in the comedy of "The Suspicious Husband." If he had been contented to resign the higher characters of tragedy when his figure became unfit for them, and had confined himself to the level of such characters as Strickland, it is probable that he would not have wanted an engagement at Covent Garden theatre; as from his education, good sense, and knowledge of life, he was much better calculated to do justice to them than those to whom such characters are usually assigned.

---

### CHAPTER XXX.

MR. SHUTER, or Ned Shuter, as he was usually styled, was a comic actor of first-rate ability, and I have been assured that Mr. Garrick pronounced him the greatest comic genius he had ever seen. I remember him in Justice Woodcock, Scrub, Peachum, and Sir Francis Gripe. As far as I can remember him, his acting was a compound of truth, simplicity, and luxuriant humour, if such qualities can unite and be coexistent. Never was an actor more popular than Shuter, yet I do not remember to have seen more than one or two prints of him, from pictures by Zoffani, in dramatic scenes, while there are innumerable representations of Liston in prints, plaster of Paris, and other forms. But the arts have improved surprisingly since the days of Shuter.

Here I must pause to say, that Liston is one of the most original actors whom I ever saw, and in some characters he is irresistibly diverting. I remember that soon after the public became sensible of his merit, Mrs. Abington asked me if I liked him, and having expressed my high opinion of his comic talents, she said, "For my part, I doat on him, and the more so because he is as ugly as myself." This favourable opinion, given by an admirable comic actress, of long experience, and who had seen so many first-rate performers, must be acceptable to Mr. Liston, though not complimentary to his person. Churchill says of Shuter in his "Rosciad,"—

Shuter, who never cared a single pin,  
Whether he left out nonsense or put in.

This was really a true description of the actor, except that he possessed genuine humour, and whenever he sported an addition to the dialogue, it was always analogous to the character which he was performing.



'To Shuter I was introduced by my father when I was very young, and remember passing an evening with my father and him at a tavern called the Blue Posts, in Russell-street, Covent Garden. All the company who were in the other boxes devoted their whole attention to Shuter, who told humorous stories, or uttered *bons-mots*, which delighted his hearers. Some time after, going through Hart-street, Bloomsbury, about twelve in the morning, I saw Shuter smartly dressed, and could not help making myself known to him. He said he was glad to "see a chip of the old block," and invited me into the public-house in that street, to partake of a glass of brandy-and-water. I was proud of the honour of being noticed by this popular droll, and readily accepted the invitation. He soon began to relate some theatrical stories, with which I was delighted. I recollect, however, only one. He said that old Hipsley, the actor, had suffered severely in his face at a fire, which gave such a ludicrous cast to his features, that the audience always laughed when he appeared on the stage. He once consulted Quin on the profession to which he should bring up his son, whom he described as a very promising boy. Quin, who thought that all Hipsley's comic merit depended on the whimsical turn of his features, roughly said, "Burn his face, and make him an actor." Quin always pronounced the letter *a* broad, as in *brass*, and in that manner Shuter related the story.

Hipsley, I understood, was reputed a good comic actor before he suffered by the accident. He was celebrated for delivering a soliloquy of his own composing, called "Hipsley's Drunken Man." He was the father of Mrs. Green, an admirable actress in the virago parts of comedy, and the first old Margaret in the opera of "The Duenna."

There was a place within my remembrance called Finch's Grotto Gardens. It was a minor Vauxhall, and was situated near the King's Bench prison. There was a grotto in the middle of the garden, an orchestra, and a rotunda. The price of admission was sixpence, and the place was much frequented. When the musical powers of Lowe, generally called Tom or Tommy Lowe, were so much impaired that he could not procure an engagement at the patent theatres, he was reduced to the necessity of accepting one at these Grotto Gardens, and his first appearance was announced in the newspapers. As my father was well acquainted with Lowe in his prosperity, he took me with him to assist in cheering him on his appearance. There we found Shuter, with some friends, ready to encourage his old associate. Lowe sung a hunting-song with evident decay of musical talents; but when it was ended, Shuter, who stood immediately below the orchestra, shouted "Bravo, Tom, your voice is as good as ever;" but my father, who had known him in his best days, told me that Shuter's applause was merely an effusion of friendly zeal. At the end of the concert, Shuter remained in the gardens, and went to sup in one of the boxes. The place was crowded, and the people thronged round the box to hear the humorous sallies of Shuter, inso-much that the waiters passed with difficulty; there was a great de-

struction of plates and dishes in the struggle, and abundance of knives and forks were scattered over the ground. No person thought of retiring while Shuter remained, and I remember seeing him in the midst of his friends as if he were the monarch of merriment.

Lowe, I understood, had once a very fine voice, but had no musical science. When Handel had quarrelled with Beard, he intended to engage Lowe for the oratorios, but finding him deficient in musical knowledge, was obliged to make peace with Beard, who, besides possessing a good voice, was a sound musician. Poor Lowe was at last reduced to accept an engagement at Sadler's Wells, where I saw him habited as an old barber, and referring to some women in the scene, he chanted in recitative the following couplet, among others of equal poetic elegance :

Mop-squeezers, I hate 'em,  
By this pomatum !

In the same dramatic piece, Harlequin, on discovering his father, expressed his filial affection in the following manner :—

It gives me joy that thou'rt my pappy :  
To do thy will shall make me happy.

Such was the pitiable destiny of Lowe, who was once so admired a singer, that I remember the following passage of a popular song which announced his vocal merits :

The first that e'er was born  
To sing the early morn,  
Was famous Tommy Lowe.

When and where he died I know not, but it was probably in obscurity and want. Yet he was once the proprietor of Marylebone Gardens, and had kept his carriage.

A friend of my father who was acquainted with Lowe, told me that he saw him going in his chariot to Marylebone Gardens soon after he became master of them, with a large iron trunk behind it, which he told the gentleman he had purchased to place the profits of the gardens in. He was a well-behaved man when sober, but very quarrelsome and abusive in his cups. He had a brother who kept a public-house in Bunhill-row, and had an annual dinner, which Lowe always attended, to serve his brother by entertaining the guests ; but he generally got drunk, then became quarrelsome and abusive, insomuch as to excite general disgust, and was more than once absolutely turned out of the house.

The last time I saw him was in a narrow lane near Aldersgate-street. He was coming out of a butcher's shop, with some meat in an old blue and white checked handkerchief. With an air of covered pride, he told me that he always bought meat himself, and that no man understood better how to choose a beef-steak. His name is to



be found in all the old song-books of Vauxhall and Marylebone Gardens. I never saw more than one print of him, and that represented him and Mrs. Chambers in the characters of Macheath and Polly.

To return to Shuter: he was never without a joke or a whimsical story. He used to give the cries of London on his annual benefit at the theatre; and the day before one of these benefits, he followed through several streets a man whose cry of his wares was peculiar. At last Shuter stopped him, told him he was Ned Shuter, and had followed him for half an hour in hopes to hear his usual cry. "Why, Master Shuter," said the man, "my wife died this morning, and *I can't cry.*"

On another occasion a mendicant, who knew him, said in a piteous tone, "Pray, Mr. Shuter, give me something, for you see I have but one shoe in the world." "No!" said Shuter, who never could control his waggish disposition, "then there's a *pair* for you," offering a Windsor *pear* which he happened to have in his pocket. Having however had his joke, he liberally relieved the man's distress.

Poor Shuter was too fond of the bottle, and injured his health so much that, though the character of Don Jerome in "The Duenna" was first intended for him, his health and faculties were so much impaired that it was assigned to Wilson, who somewhat resembled him, and whose performance of it much augmented his reputation.

When I said that Mr. Ackman was my father's first theatrical acquaintance, I had forgot his old friend Mr. Peter Bardin. This gentleman was a native of Ireland, and one of the established performers at the theatre in Goodman's Fields at the time when Garrick first appeared upon the London boards at the same theatre. Bardin was the last of the old school of Booth, Wilks, and other actors, who were much distinguished in their day. Bardin gave some offence to the audience during his connexion with Goodman's Fields, and public hostility was so strong against him, that he thought proper to withdraw from that theatre, and soon after became the manager of a provincial company.

Chetwood, in his "History of the Stage," which was published in 1749, has introduced Mr. Bardin among all the chief performers of the time, particularly the Cibbers, Garrick, Barry, &c. and refers to the event which induced the audience to be incensed against him, but does not state the occasion, so that it cannot now be known. Chetwood speaks of Bardin as having "bent his thoughts towards the stage very early in youth, and as having seen the performance of the best actors in England upon the London stages." He adds, that "his long intercourse with theatrical action improved his study, and that few parts came amiss to him." Though he does not state the cause of the public displeasure, he introduces an article taken from one of the public journals of the time, entitled "A small Animadversion on a late Officer at the Playhouse." Yet this article is equally silent as to the cause, but represents it "as a private dispute between somebody in the gallery and Bardin the actor." It may, however, be inferred that Bardin's opponent, instead of confining the dispute to

himself and the actor, appealed to the audience, and rendered it the subject of dissension in the theatre. The author says, "If Bardin had done any unwarrantable and injurious thing to a gentleman, Bardin should have made proper and ample satisfaction in his private capacity for the offence. The audience had no right in, nor care for Bardin, but they certainly have for Prince Volcius; he was their player, they had paid for him." Hence we may conclude, that as no accusation is brought against him, he suffered by private pique, which raised a party against him.

Bardin had been intimate with Mr. Donaldson, whom I have before mentioned, and also with the Earl of Halifax, and had reason to believe that he should obtain some appointment from that nobleman after he had wholly relinquished his provincial theatres; but though promised his lordship's patronage, he lingered years in expectation, and all his hopes at last ended in disappointment. In the mean time, he supported himself in London by engaging in the wine-trade by commission, and in giving instruction to candidates for theatrical distinction. He afterward went to Ireland, and by his connexion with Mr. Conolly, and other distinguished members of the Irish parliament, obtained the situation of postmaster in Dublin. Before, however, he obtained this appointment, he came to London with Barry, when the latter brought Mrs. Dancer with him, and they were both engaged by Foote at the Haymarket theatre.

I remember to have seen him play Gloucester when Barry performed *King Lear*; but he did not appear under his own name, though it is hardly probable that after so distant a period his old enemies in Goodman's Fields, if alive, would have renewed their hostility. I have a very faint recollection of his performance, but as far as I can remember, it partook of the formal school which Garrick so completely overturned by the spirit of truth, nature, and appropriate character. It may fairly be concluded that Chetwood would not have introduced Bardin among the chief performers in the biographical part of his history of the stage, unless he had been an actor of conspicuous merit; particularly as he declined to give his opinion of Bardin's conduct in the affair alluded to, but rather by his manner of mentioning the subject seems to have disapproved of that conduct.

I remember Bardin well in private life. He was a true specimen of the spirit and humour of the Irish character. Though advanced in life when I knew him, his health was good, and his spirit unabated. He was intimate with Hugh Kelly and the wits of the time, who, with my father and other friends, were fond of playing at skittles at White Conduit House and Bagnigge Wells, before he finally settled in Dublin; and I was proud of being employed by such a company to set up the pins.

Bardin was esteemed an admirable judge of acting, and an excellent instructor of those who were students for the stage. He was particularly intimate with Mr. O'Hara, the author of "*Midas*," one of the best burlettas, if not the very best in our language. He sang all the songs in it with great spirit, and must obviously have been in



his youth an actor of considerable talents and versatility. There was a conciliating heartiness in his manner that I never observed in any other person, which I have witnessed on several occasions. I was particularly struck with one instance, which may appear too trifling to be recorded, except that it illustrates character and shows the effect of manner.

I was once with him at an inn in Aldersgate-street, having accompanied him as he was going off the same night to Ireland. The porter had been on errands for him, and was telling him what he had done, and how carefully he had disposed of his great coat and luggage. Bardin, who seldom possessed more cash than was absolutely necessary for immediate expenses, and who had learned prudence in the school of adversity, listened attentively to all the man said, thanked him for his care, gave him a friendly tap on the shoulder, and with a hearty fervour said, "Well, my friend, there's an honest sixpence for you." The man was evidently disappointed at so small a recompense for the services which he had enumerated, but was so overcome by the open-hearted freedom of Bardin's manner, that, scratching his head, he said, "Well, I thank you, master, however;" though it is probable that such a trifle from persons in general, after such service, would have been answered with reproach and abuse.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, that it is recorded of Charles the First and Second, that people would rather be pleased with a refusal from the easy and gay familiarity of the son, than receive a favour from the grave dignity and reserve of the father. Mr. Sheridan had a very conciliating manner, but of a very different kind; for he would speak to a stranger in company with a sort of confidential air, as if he had been struck with the countenance of the person whom he addressed, and thought him not only a man of sense, but one in whom confidence might safely be reposed. This manner seemed to be wholly unaffected, and was generally practised upon his creditors, who, however angry and determined to enforce their demands, were so soothed by his manner, even without promises of payment, that they quitted him with feelings quite altered, and disposed to wait a little longer. I never, indeed, witnessed a manner more irresistibly winning and effective.

---

## CHAPTER XXXI.

MR. JOHN HENDERSON. I had so slight an acquaintance with this gentleman that I can speak little of him in his personal character. He was, I understand, apprenticed to some mechanical art, but before he assumed the theatrical profession was admired for his good sense, humour, and imitative powers. His introduction to a theatrical life must doubtless have been, as is usual, upon some provincial theatre,

but he first became an object of critical attention on the Bath stage. He first appeared in London at the Haymarket theatre, when under the management of the elder Colman, who was not only a skilful dramatist, but an excellent critic, a sound scholar, and, as I have heard, a very able amateur performer. Henderson excited great attention when he first appeared in London. The character was Hamlet, and, if not a great, it was certainly a judicious performance. In a short time he became so popular and attractive that he excited great jealousy among his theatrical compeers, and my old friend Ross, though a liberal man, styled him "the tar-water actor," alluding to the once famous tar-water, recommended by the amiable Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, but which had only a fleeting popularity, and when Henderson appeared on the London stage was quite forgotten.

Henderson's face and person were not fitted for tragedy, but he was an excellent comedian; and though his Falstaff was the most facetious I ever saw, yet it always struck me that it was a mixture of the old woman with the old man. He laughed and chuckled almost throughout the character, and his laugh, like that of Mrs. Jordan, spread a merry contagion, which might be said to infect the whole audience. His Benedict was so close an imitation of Garrick that my dear mother, who was an excellent judge, when we saw it together one night observed, that if it were not for the difference in person, she should have thought Garrick was performing. He was a good Shylock, and was the first who differently pointed the following passage;

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft, on the Rialto," &c.

"Many a time and oft," was generally considered as a common proverbial expression, but Henderson pointed it thus:

"Signor Antonio, many a time, and oft on the Rialto," &c.

implying that Antonio had not only generally "bated" him, but oft even on the Rialto, "where merchants most do congregate." Whatever the critics may decide on this alteration, it certainly is ingenious, and shows that Henderson was disposed to think for himself.

I remember that Mr. Brereton the actor, one of the handsomest men that ever appeared on the stage, the first husband of Mrs. John Kemble, introduced a similar innovation when he performed Hamlet, at Richmond in Surrey. Hamlet, in addressing the ghost says,

"I'll call thee king, Hamlet, father, royal Dane," &c.

Brereton pointed it thus,—

"I'll call thee king, Hamlet, father—Royal Dane, oh, answer me!"

This novelty was the subject of newspaper controversy at the time, some of the critics contending that the old mode was a pleonasm,



and an anti-climax, and others that Hamlet was wrong in calling a spectre, perhaps prone to mislead him, "Royal Dane."

The only serious or tragic character in which Henderson made a very powerful impression on the public, was in a domestic tragedy written by Mr. Cumberland, entitled "The Mysterious Husband." My late excellent friend, Mr. William Woodfall, who was a sound theatrical critic, and a warm admirer of Garrick, had made some observations in his daily paper, which Henderson thought severe, and the latter retorted in some satirical verses, in which he criticised the critic. I have been told that they were very sharp and ingenious, but were never published, probably because Henderson did not deem it politic to provoke a formidable critic who presided over a daily newspaper.

Henderson was a great lover of money, and for that object even sacrificed his attachment to an amiable widow lady, whom I knew, though it was generally understood among her friends and his that they would be married: a maiden in Wiltshire, with a fortune of 5000*l.* was too attractive for him to throw himself away on a mere love-match. The widow had heard of the matrimonial negotiation, and told him that he was reported to be on the eve of marriage. His answer was that people had often disposed of him in wedlock, but he hoped they would let him choose for himself; however, in a few days after, the newspapers announced his union with the wealthy spinster.

Henderson's Iago was a masterly piece of acting throughout. He admirably mingled the subtlety of the character with its reputed blunt honesty. His manner of varying his advice to Roderigo, "to put money in his purse," was remarkably ingenious; and so was his manner of reciting the verses which he composes by desire of Desdemona. In general, till Henderson's time, performers used to deliver those verses as if they had "got them by heart," to use the common expression; but Henderson spoke them gradually, as if he was inventing them by degrees.

Mr. Thomas Sheridan, father of the celebrated Brinsley, and Henderson entered into a partnership to deliver public recitations. The serious parts were to be spoken by Mr. Sheridan, and the comic by Henderson. Mr. Sheridan gave chiefly passages from his "Lectures on Oratory," which were in general dull and heavy, but his recitation of "Alexander's Feast" was animated and impressive to a great degree. His recitation on Shenstone's beautiful "Elegy on Jessé" was, however, languid and heavy. On the other hand, Henderson's recitations from Sterne, and particularly his recital of Cowper's admirable tale of "John Gilpin," were irresistibly diverting; the latter rendered a tale hardly known popular all over the kingdom, and furnished full scope for various artists in illustration of the citizen's unlucky journey.

Here I may be permitted to say, that I am under a similar obligation to Mr. Fawcett the actor, to whose humorous recital of my tale of "Monsieur Tonson" I am probably indebted for its extraordinary popularity, rather than to any intrinsic merit in the composition. I shall always regret that it is deficient in poetical justice, as the poor

victim of sportive persecution was finally driven from his home without any compensation for his ludicrous sufferings. Here it is proper to correct a mistake. In the last edition of this tale, with ingenious illustrations by one of the Cruickshanks, Tom King, the tormenting hero of the piece, is represented to have been the late Mr. Thomas King the actor, a comic performer long admired on Drury-lane stage, under the management of Mr. Garrick; but the Tom King of the tale was, as I have understood, the son of a former Archbishop King of Dublin, in 1721, and I have understood likewise that the tale itself was founded on fact.

The recitations by Messrs. Sheridan and Henderson were very attractive, and the room in which they were delivered was crowded every night:

Henderson was, I conceive, the best general actor since the days of Garrick, but wanted the ease and variety of that great and unrivalled master of his art. He was at times too elaborate in finishing passages in the characters which he assumed, as if he was anxious that nothing should be lost which he uttered. Hence in his Sir Giles Overreach, though a masterly performance, there was much of that laborious solicitude, and too much of it also in his Pierre. Mr. Davies, generally called Tom Davies, the well-known bookseller, who was befriended by Dr. Johnson and Garrick, and whose "Dramatic Miscellanies" prove that he possessed literary and critical abilities which rendered him worthy of their countenance, gave me the following couplet, after Henderson's first appearance in Pierre.

Otway's bold Pierre was open, generous, brave,  
The Pierre of Henderson's a subtle knave.

The great pains which Henderson took to render the minutest part of the Venetian republican impressive throughout, gave too much occasion for that metrical criticism.

Mr. Davies, or, as he was generally styled, Tom Davies, had left the stage before I frequented the theatre, no doubt induced by the cruel humour with which Churchill describes him in his admirable "Rosciad;" but he had a benefit-night allowed him by Garrick for old acquaintance sake, when he came forward to perform the part of Fainall, in the comedy of "The Way of the World." I happened to be present. He was an old, formal-looking man, and totally different from such a person as we might expect to find in a gay, dissipated husband. Before the curtain was drawn up, he came forward, and addressed the audience in the following terms. "Ladies and gentlemen, I am conscious of my inability to do justice to the character that I have undertaken, but I hope you will accept of my best endeavours to please." There were many friends of honest Tom in the house, and this address, as well as his performance of the part, was received with kind applause. Poor Davies did not attend to the good old maxim *hoc age*; for if he had confined himself to his business as a bookseller, and had not indulged his literary ambition, he would probably have lived in comfortable circumstances, though he might not



have raised a fortune. What I saw of his acting certainly appeared to justify the criticism of Churchill, though not its sportive severity. Churchill says—

Behind came mighty Davies—on my life,  
That Davies has a very pretty wife.

Without animadverting upon the impropriety of dragging an inoffensive female before the public, it may fairly be concluded, that Davies being an avowed politician, whose principles were different from those of Churchill, was the cause of the poet's hostility towards him. I once saw the "pretty wife." She was quietly sitting in the shop, while her husband was pursuing his literary avocations in the back-room. She was in the autumn of life, neatly dressed, modest in her aspect, with a kind of meek dejection in her features, which evidently bore the remains of beauty. It is lamentable to relate what I have been informed was the final destiny of this harmless couple. He died in poverty, and was buried at the expense of his friends; and his amiable widow, as I heard, was reduced to the deplorable asylum of the parish workhouse.

Another bookseller whom I knew, and who had nearly brought himself into similar distress, though from a different cause, was my late old friend Mr. Becket, who was one of the most eminent booksellers in London. The firm was Becket and De Hont, and they published the most valuable works in their day. De Hont retired from the business, and went with a large fortune to Holland. Becket was not equally provident. He became acquainted with Garrick, and was so fascinated by the conversational powers of that great actor, that he devoted to him a great part of his time every morning. The firm of Becket and De Hont was held at a respectable house on the south side of the New Church, in the Strand; but when the Adamsons had built the Adelphi, chiefly over old Durham Yard, the depository of all the rubbish in the neighbourhood, Mr. Becket removed to a large house at the south-east corner of Adam-street, in the Strand. The expense of this house, and his daily attendance on Garrick, with the gradual decline of his business, induced him to remove to a house opposite to the Shakspeare Gallery in Pall Mall, where, by blending the business of a stationer with that of a bookseller, he was able to support himself with comfort and respect. He had the credit of publishing, in his latter days, that learned, poetical, and admirable work, "*The Pursuits of Literature*."

The same sort of mystery hangs over the origin of this work as over the letters of Junius, and the heroic "*Epistle to Sir William Chambers*." The suspicion has generally fallen upon Mr. Mathias, a gentleman whom I have long known and esteemed. It seems to be very probable, that if he was not the sole author, he had some concern in the composition, for which he was well qualified by his knowledge, his abilities, and his determined attachment to the good old political constitution of this country. When I was one of the proprietors of a

daily paper entitled "The True Briton," the late John Gifford, Esq., one of the police magistrates at a subsequent period, was the editor. Struck by the political rectitude and moral tendency, as well as with the high poetical merits of "The Pursuits of Literature," the four cantos of which were published successively, he entered into an elaborate criticism of the work, upon which he bestowed warm commendation. Soon after a letter was addressed to the editor of "The True Briton," pointing out the poem to the attention of the public at large.

Meeting Mr. Mathias at the King's theatre one evening, and talking on the subject of the poem, I asked him if he had seen the letter in question. I observed that it was probably written by the author of the poem. He agreed with me, but said, "If you examine it well, you will find that it does not contain any panegyric on the intellectual powers displayed in the work, but confines itself to the beneficial tendency of particular passages, and the general soundness of its constitutional principles." Pursuing the subject, I observed that as he was supposed to be the author of it, it was natural to suppose he would strenuously recommend it to general attention. "Ay, ay," said he; "I have suffered much abuse upon the subject, but they will find out their mistake hereafter." Whoever was the author, I could not but feel highly gratified that I was complimented with two editions of it "from the author."

Becket, the publisher, who was faithful to his trust, and, like Junius, to use the words of the latter, suffered the secret "to perish with him," was a good-humoured man, and whenever I happened to see him, I always pretended to suppose he was the author, and that I felt myself indebted to him for the copies, adding that I hoped he would soon bring forward another edition of a work so honourable to his learning, talents, and principles. He with his usual good-humour, thanked me for entertaining so favourable an opinion of his powers, adding, "I think in my next edition I shall soften some passages and strengthen others." This served as a laughing joke between us, till death deprived me of a valued old friend. The allusions in the poem and notes to my late friends Mr. William Boscawen the translator of Horace, and Mr. Henry James Pye, the late poet laureate, a profound scholar and able critic, a good poet and excellent man, induced them to vent their anger in two spirited poems, and occasional strictures in the newspapers; and even my mild friend Jerningham was roused into a sportive resentment by some reference to him.

The late Mr. George Steevens, generally styled Commentator Steevens, from his annotations on Shakspeare, said of "The Pursuits of Literature," that "the poem was merely a peg to hang notes upon;" but, if I may presume to judge, it is a work of high poetical merit. The author says in a parody on Pope, alluding to my late friend Mr. William Gifford,

I sit and think I read my Pope anew.



Much as I revere the talents of my friend Gifford, I cannot but think that there is much of poetical inspiration, and not less of vigour, in "The Pursuits of Literature;" and I conceive that the character of the bard in that poem, considering its extent, may be compared to some of the best productions in our language.

Mr. Mathias published a pamphlet on the subject of the poems alleged to have been written in the fifteenth century by a monk named Rowley. Mr. Mathias impartially gives all the arguments *pro* and *con*, for Rowley and Chatterton, and appears to decide in favour of the former. It would, indeed, be the height of presumption in me to give an opinion on the subject, as it has employed the learning and sagacity of many high authorities, but yet I may venture to say something. Chatterton had not reached his sixteenth year when he produced the poems in question. They are numerous, and display great poetical merit. Chatterton had little education. He was vain and proud. Though he had not much employment in an attorney's office, yet he had some. He possessed talents, chiefly of a satirical kind. He always positively and solemnly avowed that the poems were the compositions of Rowley, and discovered by him in the manner he had described. He had no books that could furnish him with the means of imitating the language of the period in question, and, considering the great extent of the poems, the mere transcription of them would have been a work of much time and labour, even without considering the time and labour that would be required to fabricate all the imputed imposition. I therefore presume to infer, that it is not within the compass of the human powers, however precocious, to have composed such works at the time of life at which Chatterton produced them. That he may have employed the language of a different period to fill up the chasms and give unity to the whole, may be admitted, and in this respect his ignorance has been detected. Upon the whole I propose a question, which, as far as I know, has not been asked before: Would Chatterton have been believed if, in the first instance, he had avowed himself to be the author of Rowley's poems? Would it have been thought that with his uneducated mind, his limited opportunities, and at his early time of life, it was possible for him to have accumulated the means necessary for so elaborate a fabrication? It has been said that passages in the Rowley poems are taken from Shakspeare, Dryden, and others; but it does not appear that he had any of the works of those authors, nor are the passages in question of such a peculiar nature as not to have occurred to any poet conversant with human life and nature. Finally, is it consistent with the nature of mankind, that a poet, gifted with such high powers, and conscious of possessing them, should obstinately decline that fame, distinction, and patronage which works of so much merit were calculated to excite?

Having mentioned my friend Mr. William Boscawen, the translator of Horace, and who favoured me with the work, it is but justice to his memory to recur to him. He was one of the commissioners of the victualling office, and, though so partial to the muses, he never

suffered them to interfere with his public duty. He was one of the most active contributors to that admirable institution "The Literary Fund," having for many years supplied an annual tribute of verses in support of it, which he recited himself on the anniversary celebration, as long as his health permitted. He was the nephew of Admiral Boscawen, a naval hero, much and deservedly distinguished in his day; and though the triumph of the immortal Nelson in the battle of the Nile eclipsed the glory of all his professional predecessors, yet Mr. Boscawen was the first who came forward to pay poetical homage, in a very spirited ode, in honour of the glorious victor.

The last time I saw him, I met him in the Strand, on the very day of the annual celebration; but though he had sent a poem for the occasion, he was too ill to attend the meeting. I had previously expressed my regret that he had translated Horace's "Art of Poetry" in verses of eight syllables, and he assured me at this last meeting that he had taken my hint, and was proceeding to invest it with the heroic measure; but I believe his new version has never been published. He was a truly worthy man in his domestic life, as well as a scholar, a poet, and a gentleman.

"The Literary Fund" naturally leads me to mention my late friend Mr. William Thomas Fitzgerald, who was one of the most zealous, strenuous, and persevering friends and supporters of that benevolent institution. During many years he constantly supplied his Parnassian tribute at the annual festivity, and recited it himself with such energy and effect as to render that festivity very attractive. If his health had continued, he would probably have supplied an annual tribute on every return of the celebration. At length his vigour declined, and he was unable to attend the meetings. He died last year [1829], and I venerate his memory, for a more honourable man I never knew. He has thought proper to mention me with partial kindness in his volume of poems, and I am proud of having enjoyed the friendship of so worthy a character. He was related to the noble family of Leinster, and was generally allowed to be an accomplished scholar. He enjoyed the friendship of the late Lord Dudley and Ward, one of the most amiable and benevolent of British noblemen, and used to pass much of his time at the hospitable mansion of that nobleman in town, and at his magnificent mansion at Himley. That estimable nobleman died intestate, well knowing that his son and successor would amply fulfil his wishes without the formality of legal distribution. Judging from the present noble lord's conduct towards Mr. Fitzgerald, it is obvious that the late nobleman had full reason to rely on his son's filial respect, affection, and duty. Mr. Fitzgerald would probably have been highly gratified to have been honoured with notice, and moderately remembered in the late lord's will; but the present lord actually presented to him 5000*l.* as the virtual legacy of his departed father. Nor is this all, for he gave him permission to occupy the house in which he himself resided at Paddington, rent-free, where



Mr. Fitzgerald died, and where his widow and family doubtless enjoy the same benevolent privilege.

These are imperial works, and worthy kings.

Feelings of respect for the memory of a very worthy man, a good poet, and an eminent scholar, induce me to say a few words on my friend Mr. Henry James Pye. He also was an active and resolute supporter of "The Literary Fund," and often added his poetical contributions at the anniversary meeting, which, however, he never recited himself, as he had an impediment in his speech. He was once the proprietor of landed property to a great extent in Berkshire, and was member for the county. How he lost that property I never heard, but understood that he was a generous and hospitable man. His learning was shown in his translation of "The Poetic" of Aristotle, and he published many poems highly creditable to his genius and taste. His largest and best poem was entitled "Alfred," of which the founder of our laws was the hero. He also wrote a tragedy entitled "Adelaide," which was represented with success at Drury-lane theatre. Mrs. Siddons was the heroine, and at Mr. Pye's desire I wrote the epilogue for that lady to speak. She said that, to show her respect for me, she would speak it if I wished, but, after playing a long part, she desired to get home as soon as possible, and hoped I would excuse her. The epilogue was then assigned to Miss Mellon, the present Duchess of St. Alban's, who delivered it with such spirit as might amply atone for its poetical demerits. Mr. Pye condescended to submit to me some of his *official* verses as poet laureate; and never was there an author who listened with more attention to proposed corrections, or was more ready to adopt them. His house, even to the last, when he was one of the police magistrates, was the resort of genius and the scene of hospitality. He published a work entitled "Comments on the Commentators of Shakspeare, with preliminary observations on his genius and writings, and on the labours of those who have endeavoured to elucidate them." He affixed a Greek motto to the work, and the following apt quotation from "The Spectator," No. 138. "One meets now and then with persons who are extremely learned and knotty in expounding clear cases." This work displays great critical acumen, with much humour and playful ridicule. He also published "Sketches on various subjects, moral, literary, and political," a very amusing and instructive volume.

Mr. Pye was a very affectionate father, a very pleasant companion, and a very warm friend. He had two daughters, the eldest of whom was married to an officer in the navy, and the second to my friend Mr. Arnold, the proprietor of the late English Opera-house, and the son of my old and esteemed friend Dr. Arnold, whose musical works bear ample testimony to his taste, judgment, and learning, in one of the most gratifying sciences that contribute to the enjoyment of private life as well as to the amusement of the public. Mr. Arnold, the son,

I knew in his "boyish days," and at that period he held forth a promise of the talents which have been successfully displayed in his dramatic productions. I would willingly bear a more ample testimony of my respect and esteem for him, but shall avoid every thing that might be thought flattering to the living, and only express my ardent hope that he will be able to re-establish that dramatic edifice which he reared with so much zeal, prudence, and enterprise, and which he conducted with so much judgment, discretion, and liberality.

To show the moderation and contented disposition of Mr. Pye, he resided, I understood, in a cottage on that ample estate of which he previously had been the owner. I know not whether his official odes as poet laureate have ever been published in a collected shape ; but it is proper they should be, since they do honour to his memory as a spirited and learned poet, as well as a loyal subject, and a worthy member of society.

As this division of my miscellaneous work began with actors, I shall take leave to say something more of that amusing community.

I was very intimate with MR. KING, so long a comic actor at Drury-lane theatre during the management of Garrick. Mr. King was the son of a respectable tradesman in Westminster, and went to the same academy in that neighbourhood as my friend Mr. Donaldson, before the latter was sent to Westminster school. Mr. King, whose friendly and social qualities procured him the general designation of Tom King, averse to his father's business, felt, on leaving school, the impulse of theatrical ambition, and joined some strolling companies in various parts of this country. He made no scruple to relate the various vicissitudes of his roving life, and abounded with anecdotes of his rambling theatrical pursuits. At one time, when the company to which he was attached was stationed at Beaconsfield, he was unprovided with decent apparel, and so destitute of cash that he walked to London to borrow a pair of stockings of a friend. That friend contrived to procure a bed for him, but he was obliged to walk back the following day to Beaconsfield, in order to be in time "to strut his hour upon the stage" at night, and perhaps to perform two or three characters. He said that his share of the profits was three shillings and some ends of candle.

Before I became acquainted with King, Mr. Donaldson told me, if ever I should happen to know him, to ask him to relate two stories which he mentioned to me. I did not forget the hint, and when, many years after, I became acquainted with him, I circuitously endeavoured to draw his attention to the matter ; "I see what you are at," said King, "but you need not take any trouble on the occasion, for I will tell the stories immediately." He then, with as much readiness as if he was telling an occurrence of the passing day, related the stories in question with great humour and powers of mimicry.

Mr. King unfortunately had a strong propensity to gaming, which towards the decline of life made him feel the "*res angusta domi*." Upon one occasion it is said that he lost about 7000*l.*, and that he hurried home, went into his bedchamber, fell on his knees, and asked



his wife, who was in bed, for a prayer-book or a bible. Mrs. King was alarmed, and apprehended that he had been suddenly seized with insanity. Whether or not he obtained either of the books he desired, I know not, but he continued on his knees, and fervently vowed that he never would visit a gaming-house again. Unhappily, the fascinating vice again tempted him, and at length deprived him of the means of renewing his chance of regaining the favour of fortune.

About the year 1782, he had a respectable house in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, and another near Mr. Garrick's seat at Hampton; and I believe about that period Mr. and Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble shared their Christmas holidays with him at the latter place. He was then easy in his circumstances, having a large salary, and usually a productive annual benefit. His society was generally courted, as he abounded in whimsical anecdotes, which he related with great spirit and humour; he was a very entertaining companion.

He had some time *protected* Miss Baker, an admired dancer, and having unfortunately broken his leg, her attention to him demonstrated such sincere affection, that he married her on his recovery. She proved an amiable and affectionate wife, and submitted with patience to the decline of his fortunes, though it was the result of his unhappy devotion to the gaming-table.

As an actor, he represented the characters with a reference to human nature, with which he was well acquainted; and he never copied his predecessors, as many actors, both tragic and comic, have often done. He was chiefly excellent in representing the bucks and bloods of the time, a noxious race of animals that are now happily extinct, owing to the strictness of police regulations. We may judge of the manners of the times, even within the memory of our veteran contemporaries, when we find that a learned physician, who mixed with the world, made the hero of his comedy mount a ladder, and enter into a lady's chamber at midnight. If any person were now to adopt such conduct in private life, he would soon probably find Sir Richard Birnie a very rigid critic, and a strict observant of "time, place, and action." That the comedy in question experienced some opposition at first, is evident from the following epigram, which was thrown into the author's carriage while he was attending a patient, and which found its way into the newspapers:

TO DOCTOR HOADLEY, M.D.

Dear doctor, since your comic muse don't please,  
Turn to your tragic, and write *recipies*.\*

Towards the decline of life, being embarrassed, and finding it difficult to procure arrears of salary from Mr. Sheridan, King quitted Drury-lane theatre, *placarded* that gentleman in the public streets,

\* Quin, in his usual sarcastic manner, being an enemy to pantomimic comedies, said that "The Suspicious Husband" should be named "The Hat and the Ladder," alluding to two incidents in the piece.

and was engaged by Mr. Harris, the chief proprietor of Covent Garden theatre; but he performed a very few nights, as Mr. Lewis, who was then stage manager, manifested some discontent, conceiving that some of his own characters might be assigned to King. This dissatisfaction Mr. Lewis communicated to me, and afterward to Mr. Harris, who became alarmed lest he should lose so excellent an actor; and King, having received amicable overtures from Mr. Sheridan, resumed his station at Old Drury, and Mr. Lewis was easily reconciled to his old manager.

Churchill says of King—

'Mongst Drury's sons he comes and shines in brass.

It is probable that the satirical poet here intended a pun, and did not intend to confine his meaning to the character in the comedy of "The Confederacy," but to King's general excellence in *brazen* characters; though, indeed, King's peculiar merit in that character was *unique*, and hardly admitted of a parallel. On the death of poor Tom King, his widow was literally obliged to live in a garret in Tottenham-court-road, which she made a little paradise, and was chiefly supported by the liberal contributions of some old friends till her death.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

MRS. INCHBALD. I became acquainted with this lady in the year 1782, and an uninterrupted friendship existed between us till her death. When I first knew her, she was a very fine woman, and although conscious of the beauty of her person, she never indulged herself in any expenses for the purpose of making it appear to more advantage. She was at this time an actress at Covent Garden theatre; but, though she always displayed good sense, and a just conception of the characters which she performed, yet she never rose to any height of professional reputation. She had a slight impediment in her speech in ordinary conversation, but it never appeared when she was performing on the stage.

It is not necessary to enter into her private life, as she has herself given a brief account of it. It is sufficient to say, that when she was about seventeen years of age, she left the house of her father, a farmer in Norfolk or Suffolk, and being strongly imbued with theatrical ambition, she applied to Mr. Griffith, manager of the Norwich company, and in time became connected with many provincial theatres in England and Scotland. She married Mr. Inchbald, an actor and a miniature-painter, a man much older than herself, whose character was highly respected.



Mr. Inchbald had, I believe, been previously married, and for a season or two had an engagement at Drury-lane theatre, under the management of Garrick, and thought of that actor's merit, as all men of taste, learning, and judgment did, with the highest admiration. Mrs. Inchbald told me, that in the earlier part of her life she was very irritable in her temper, but time, reflection, and the vicissitudes of fortune had softened and subdued her natural disposition. She mentioned one particular instance of the warmth of her temper when she and her husband were in a boarding-house at Canterbury, while they were both engaged in the theatre of that city. Mr. Inchbald had been employed all the morning in copying a miniature portrait of Garrick. At length dinner was announced by the mistress of the house, and Mrs. Inchbald desired her husband to attend it. He signified that he would be ready in a minute or two, but continued to touch his picture. Mrs. Inchbald then urged him to attend at the table below, but finding he still lingered over the portrait, she suddenly seized it, and in a moment obliterated all his morning's work. She expressed her regret at this action, not only as it was an act of reprehensible violence, but as it was a painful outrage on the feelings of a worthy man.

I was in the habit of visiting her every Sunday morning for many years, first when she had apartments in Russell-street, Covent Garden; next in Leicester-square, and afterward in Hart-street, near the theatre. She occupied the second floor in all these apartments. The first was in the house which had been called Button's. Mrs. Inchbald was then engaged by the elder Colman, at the Haymarket theatre, where she produced her first dramatic piece, entitled "I'll tell ye what," which was so well acted, and so favourably received, that she was induced to relinquish the stage, and devote herself to dramatic and other literary pursuits.

One incident which occurred during her engagement at Covent Garden theatre deserves recording. It is well known that the late Mr. Harris, then the chief proprietor of that theatre, was a very gallant man, and did not find the virtue of several of his fair performers impregnable. At his desire, Mrs. Inchbald attended him one morning at his house at Knightsbridge, to consult on one of her plays which was soon to be represented. When the consultation was ended, Mr. Harris, who was a handsome man, and had found so little difficulty among the theatrical sisterhood under his government, thought that he might be equally successful in an attack on Mrs. Inchbald; but, instead of regular approaches, he attempted to take the fort by storm, and Mrs. Inchbald found no resource but in seizing him by his hair, which she pulled with such violence that she forced him to desist. She then rushed out of the house, and proceeded in haste, and under great agitation, to the green-room of the theatre, where the company were then rehearsing. She entered the room with so wild an air, and with such evident emotion, that all present were alarmed. She hastily related what had happened as far as her impediment would permit her, and concluded with the following exclamation: "Oh! if he had wo-wo-worn a wig, I had been ru-ruined."

Though scandal was formerly not uncommon among the theatrical community, I never heard the least impeachment on her character, nor do I believe she ever gave occasion for the slightest insinuations. She was modest in the estimation of her literary productions, and often expressed surprise at their success; yet she exulted in that success not merely from pecuniary advantages, which were then not the least important, but because it raised her name into public notice and distinction. She carefully noticed the amount of the prices at which her works were respectively sold, and the last time she mentioned the subject to me she said, with no slight gratification, that they now, altogether, sold for not less than twenty pounds.

When she finally quitted the stage, the loss of salary induced her to contract her expenses, and she actually occupied an attic at a milliner's in the Strand. I then only saw her when she came down to me in the shop, or when she called on me at the Sun office in the same street. Her next residence was at a public-house in St. George's-row, on the Uxbridge Road. The name of the house was the Hanover Arms, which she told me she thought was a pretty title. There was a private door to the house. She was delighted with the view over Hyde Park, but as new plantations intercepted her prospect, she removed to a respectable lodging and boarding-house in that fine row of houses called Earl's Court, which fronts Holland House on the Hammersmith Road. She afterward removed to a contiguous row of houses styled Leonard's Place, and finally settled at a large and respectable mansion called Kensington House, where she lodged and boarded, and died.

Though of the Roman Catholic persuasion, she was buried according to the ceremonies of the Church of England, but was so much respected that two Roman Catholic priests attended the funeral. She was buried in Kensington Church-yard, and her grave adjoins that of a son of the late right honourable George Canning.

As Mrs. Inchbald made so conspicuous a figure in her time, and as her works are likely to exist as long as the drama and literature of the country, I am persuaded that I shall gratify my readers in general by some extracts from her many letters to me in the course of a long and intimate friendship, which nothing tended to disturb, and from which I derived many of the most agreeable years of my life. These extracts will illustrate and do honour to her character, particularly when it is known that, though she was so severely economical, denying herself most of the ordinary comforts of life, and incurring the imputation of avarice, and even of insanity, on account of her ascetic privations, yet her great object was to support two sisters; to assist an unprosperous nephew, and to secure a provision for them in case of her decease.

As I cannot but be proud of the friendship of so respectable and enlightened a character, I might justly be charged with affected modesty if I were not to insert the following inscription, which she sent to me in her own handwriting, on the titlepage of her comedy entitled "To Marry or not to Marry."



## "TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

"From the author, who openly declares that it is much easier for her to write a play than to express the gratitude she feels for the various, the numerous obligations which she has received from him."

When she had nearly finished her play entitled "Lovers' Vows," she applied to me to write some doggerel rhymes for the character which she has denominated "The Rhyming Butler," alleging that she never could write poetry, or even rhymes. I readily consented, of course, but found some difficulty in adapting the two compositions which were to be delivered by the butler, to his supposed vanity and folly, with, however, somewhat of a ludicrous humour in his character. The lines pleased her, and were adopted. They were very successful with the public, chiefly owing to the admirable manner in which they were recited by that excellent comic actor, Mr. Munden.

The late Mr. George Hardinge, the barrister, a nephew of the great Lord Camden, and one of the Welsh judges, thought so favourably of these lines, that he wrote a commendatory letter to me on the subject, though I had not the least acquaintance with him. I returned his civility, of course, and once afterward passed him in the street, but did not think proper to make myself known. I had another letter from him, adverting to a tract of playful severity, which he entitled "The Essence of Malone," upon what he deemed the inconsistencies of the learned commentator in his "Life of Dryden." I was never introduced to him, but was to his wife, after their separation, and have seldom seen a more amiable and intelligent lady. She was also a very handsome, and what is generally styled a fine woman. It is truly lamentable that such a woman should not have rendered the married state a happy one, particularly as her husband always spoke of her in the highest terms, and professed the strongest esteem and admiration of her person and character.

The play of "Lovers' Vows" was very successful, and the fair authoress received for it 500*l.* from the manager. Having written the prologue to the play, as well as the lines for the Rhyming Butler, I received a letter from her, requesting that I would call on her, as she had something particular to say. Always ready and happy to serve her, I went without delay, but when I arrived, instead of speaking to me, she put a paper into my hand, and when I asked her what it contained, she said twenty guineas; observing that, as the Rhyming Butler was a main feature in her play, and as she could not have provided the versification for him, she thought that she ought not to derive so much pecuniary advantage from the play without my sharing the profits. It was in vain I assured her that I should be ashamed of receiving any recompense for such mere nonsense; she insisted on my taking the money, and I was obliged to open the window and threaten to throw it into the street for the first lucky passenger, if she refused to take it back. This menace, which of course for her sake I should not have carried into effect, induced her to comply, and the next day I received the following letter:

"TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

"Out of the twenty guineas that you threw at my head, I am resolved to buy half a dozen sixteenths of the lottery. From my own luck I shall get nothing, I am certain; therefore I request that you will to-morrow, about three in the afternoon (the time of drawing ends, and they will answer for those undrawn), call and go with me—afterward, take three sixteenths and the number of my three, and agree to share in the prizes, which, managed thus, I am certain will be valuable. If you refuse this trivial partnership, there shall be a total end of all intercourse between us for ever. I shall buy the tickets without you. My money will go equally if I have blanks, and if I am successful I shall impute the luck to you. Come, and let me despise the gains by 'Lovers' Vows,' in comparison with our gains by the lottery.\*

"E. INCHBALD."

Mrs. Inchbald was censured and ridiculed by many of her former theatrical connexions, and even by some of her private friends, for her thrifty habits, which were imputed to her extreme love of money, as she had derived much profit from her plays and other productions. Having a sincere friendship for her, I told her in a letter what I had heard, assuring her I was persuaded the charge was unjust, and only ventured to tell her of it in order that, if there was any part of her conduct which might expose her to such a charge, she might do justice to herself, as I knew she generally practised self-denial to contribute to the assistance of some relations. The following is her answer:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I read your letter with gratitude, because I have had so many proofs of your friendship for me, that I do not once doubt of your kind intentions.

"You have taken the best method possible on such an occasion, not to hurt my spirits; for had you suspected me to be insane, or even nervous, you would have mentioned the subject with more caution, and by so doing might have given me alarm.

"That the world should say I have lost my senses, I can readily forgive, when I recollect that a few years ago it said the same of Mrs. Siddons.

"I am now fifty-two years old, and yet if I were to dress, paint, and visit, no one would call my understanding in question; or if I were to beg from all my acquaintance a guinea or two, as subscription for a foolish book, no one would accuse me of avarice. But because I choose that retirement, suitable to my years, and think it my duty to support two sisters instead of one servant, I am accused of madness. I might plunge in debt, be confined in prison, a pensioner on 'The Literary Fund,' or be gay as a girl of eighteen, and yet be considered

\* As the reader may be desirous of knowing the result of the lottery adventure, it is proper to state that fortune so far favoured us that we derived about threepence each from this enterprising adventure.



as perfectly in my senses ; but because I choose to live in independence, affluence to me, with a mind serene and prospects unclouded, I am supposed to be mad. In making use of the word affluence, I do not mean to exclude some inconveniences annexed, but this is the case in every state. I wish for more suitable lodgings, but I am unfortunately averse to a street, after living so long in a square ; but with all my labour to find one, I cannot fix on a spot such as I wish to make my residence for life, and till I do, and am confined to London, the beautiful view from my present apartment of the Surrey hills and the Thames invites me to remain here, for I believe that there is neither such fine air nor so fine a prospect in all the town. I am, besides, near my sisters here ; and the time when they are not with me is so wholly engrossed in writing that I want leisure for the convenience of walking out. Retirement in the country would, perhaps, have been more advisable than in London, but my sisters did not like to accompany me, and I did not like to leave them behind. There is, besides, something animating in the reflection that I am in London, though partaking of none of its festivities.

“ In the midst of the serenity I have been boasting, I own that I have one sorrow that weighs heavy upon me. Much as it is supposed that I value money, I would gladly give up all I am at present earning, and something added to it, that I had never engaged in those unwieldy prefaces. I have had my memoirs, in four volumes, for years lying by me. A large sum has been offered for them, yet, though I am charged with loving money, I never hesitated when I conceived that my reputation was in the balance. I accepted the offer made to me to write these things as far the less evil of the two, indeed as no evil ; but now I fear that I should not have encountered more odium had I published my life ; and yet a great deal of difficulty might have been avoided in arranging the former for publication to my advantage, by a proper assortment of subjects. As it is, I must submit, for I am bound in honour to obey.

“ E. INCHBALD.”

It may be thought that I was officious in giving occasion for the foregoing letter, but, as I have said, hearing her character arraigned for avarice and meanness among the theatrical community, I deemed it right to adopt an intrepid sincerity, such as friendship demanded. I remember that my friend Mr. Richardson, whom I have before mentioned, soon after we became acquainted, on his leaving St. John's College, Cambridge, exacted a promise from me that I would tell him whatever I might hear to his disadvantage, that he might reform if the charge was just, or defend himself if false. This rule I have always observed with those dear to me.

Mrs. Inchbald lived at this time on the south side of the Strand, opposite to the New Church, and her apartment was an attic ; and thus did she deny herself many of the comforts of life from motives of affection to relations who required pecuniary assistance. Such a letter does honour to her feelings, and I am proud of having tempted

her to write it. The prefaces which she mentions were to accompany a new edition of "The British Drama," and they prove her pure taste and sound judgment in her critical remarks on the respective productions. Her novels of "A Simple Story" and "Nature and Art," manifest a full knowledge of the depth of the human heart, and of the changes of disposition to which it is so frequently subjected by the vicissitudes of fortune. These novels will live like those of Smollett and Fielding, though of a very different description, and with respect to profound knowledge and moral tendency, more in analogy with the works of Richardson. What are the boasted novels of the present, even the most celebrated, compared with the four greater writers above mentioned?—mere phantoms of an hour.

Besides her well-known plays and farces, Mrs. Inchbald wrote a tragedy in prose on the French revolution, and the fate of the unfortunate Louis XVI. It was printed, but never published. She sent a copy of it to me, with the following note, which I insert, because I cannot but be proud that such a woman should have paid such a compliment to my opinion:—"I am undetermined whether to publish this play or not—do, dear creature, give me your opinion. I will send for an answer to-morrow, or if you call here, leave a note if I am from home."

As far as I can recollect, I advised her to suppress it. With respect to her memoirs, the following is, authentic and ludicrous. The manuscript was submitted to the judgment of my friend Mr. Alexander Chalmers, and a more liberal and judicious critic could not have been found. As the work consisted chiefly of that portion of her life which passed in provincial theatrical companies, before she came to London, and nothing of what occurred after she was engaged at a London theatre, when her mind was expanded, and her knowledge augmented by an intercourse with literary and other enlightened connexions, Mr. Chalmers advised her to suppress it, and she submitted to his opinion, though she was then in narrow circumstances. She did not, however, destroy the manuscript. A popular publisher of that time hearing of the work, waited on her, and offered one hundred pounds for it. She referred him to Mr. Chalmers, who had decided on its merits. The publisher hastened to Mr. Chalmers, and learning from that gentleman that he disapproved of the publication, observed that, as Mr. Chalmers was a grave character, the work might savour too much of youthful levity, and be of too piquant a nature for him to relish, evidently conceiving that the work was of a description similar to those of Constantia Phillips, Mrs. Bellamy, Mrs. Baddely, &c. &c. "Oh!" said Mr. Chalmers, "if you imagine it contains any thing that the chastest eye ought not to peruse, you are grossly mistaken." Hearing these words, the publisher started from his chair, seized his hat, left the room abruptly, and hurried to Mrs. Inchbald, telling her that he declined purchasing the work. Yet this man has come forward as a moral and political reformer, and, perhaps, is one of the Society for the Suppression of Vice and Irreligion.

It may appear strange, that, as Mrs. Inchbald was a young and



very fine woman when her husband died, she never married again. She had certainly several suitors, and I have reason to believe that the late Mr. John Kemble was among them; and it is always surprising to me that she rejected him, as I know she had the highest respect and esteem for him, insomuch that she never mentioned him without applying to him the following line of the poet—

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd.

When I asked her why she had not married again, her answer was, "That for wedlock, friendship was too familiar, and love too precarious."

---

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

**Mrs. ABINGTON.** This actress affords an extraordinary instance of the effect of industry, perseverance, and spirit. Her origin was of the lowest kind. She lived with her father in Vinegar Yard, Drury-lane. Whether he was ever in any business, or how he supported himself with his daughter, afterward Mrs. Abington, till she reached the age of about twelve, is not known, but at that period she was able to maintain herself and him, which she did in a very decent manner. Her maiden name was Barton, as mentioned in many theatrical annals.

The late Arthur Murphy, whose learning and talents, particularly as a dramatic writer, have raised him far above any tribute of respect that I could offer to his memory, told me that he had seen her when she was about the age above-mentioned, and that she then supported herself and her father by her recitations at the Bedford and Shakspeare taverns, under the piazzas in Covent Garden. Her custom was, to desire the waiter to inform any private company in their rooms that she would deliver passages from Shakspeare and other writers for a small reward. When the company consented, she stepped upon the table and delivered the several compositions. Every thing relative to the stage was interesting to Mr. Murphy, and that feeling induced him to pay particular attention to this theatrical girl, which fixed her person on his memory. As she increased in age and practice, this itinerant profession became less attractive as a novelty, and she was then driven to the necessity of adopting more profligate and degrading means of support; and this degrading profession, which it is not necessary to designate more particularly, she was in the habit of pursuing for some years before she happily found her way to the theatrical boards.

The manner in which Mr. Murphy afterward saw her in her degraded state was as follows: A party of his friends, consisting of

four, had agreed to take an excursion to Richmond, in Surrey, and to pass the day there. The gentlemen were to meet at the Turk's Head Coffee-house, opposite Catharine-street in the Strand. Mr. Murphy and two of the friends, whose names I have forgotten, were punctual to the appointment, but they waited for the fourth till their patience was nearly exhausted. At length Mr. Murphy said he knew where to find the fourth gentleman, and would go in pursuit of him. He immediately proceeded to a notorious house under the piazza in Covent Garden, and there found him. This person was a Mr. Tracy, a gentleman of fortune, well known at that time under the name of Beau Tracy, on account of the gayety and splendour of his attire. Finding that Tracy was in the house, Mr. Murphy proceeded at once to his bedroom, where he found the beau under the hands of his hairdresser, and not half attired. Mr. Murphy waited very patiently till the grand business of the toilet was concluded. While he waited, he thought he saw the curtains of the bed move, as if there were a person within. Mr. Murphy asked the beau if he had not a companion. Tracy, a careless rake, answered in the affirmative, and told him to go and chat with her, as he would find her a lively wench. Murphy, therefore, drew one of the curtains aside, and entered into conversation with a fair votaress of Venus, whom he immediately recognised as the girl who had entertained him and his friends some years before at the taverns. She did not seem abashed at being seen by a stranger, but conversed with him with ease, spirit, and humour.

The next time he saw her, after the progress of years, was in the station of the first-rate comic actress at the metropolitan theatres, as Mrs. Abington. Having acquired a high reputation on the London boards, she was offered an engagement at the Cork theatre, which she accepted, and was accompanied on her journey by Mr. Needham, whom I have mentioned before. She had not then been so long rescued from the degraded life which she had previously led, as to acquire that sense of decorum and delicacy which was necessary to procure her a reception in society where reputation was regarded; and therefore she had no scruple to appear with Mr. Needham upon the most intimate and familiar footing.

The circumstance of her connexion with Mr. Needham, as well as her taste for dress, were so well known, that the milliners in the city of Cork put the following label in their shop windows, "Abington caps may be had here for those that *Need'em*." How long Needham, a gay and dissipated man, remained with her at Cork, is not known, but when she accepted an engagement afterward at Dublin, she thought it necessary to assume a more precise deportment, and even to affect in public an extraordinary degree of purity. But this mask was so entirely thrown off among some of the Irish noblemen, and other characters well known for wealth and liberality, that as most of them were acquainted with each other, on comparing notes, they found that each had been induced by her to think himself the only person distinguished by her partiality; so that one and all gave her such a designation, connected with her baptismal name of *Fan*, as



rendered all her subsequent pretensions to virtue fruitless, and induced her to return to London, where she was more cautious in her concessions and more guarded in her general conduct.

At length, such was Murphy's high opinion of her comic powers, that he not only assigned to her the chief parts in his comedies, but dedicated his play of "The Way to keep Him" to her, chiefly on account of the admirable manner in which she had performed the character of the Widow Belmour. From motives of humanity as well as delicacy, I should forbear to mention the preceding circumstances of her life, if they did not afford a striking evidence that people, by industry, fortitude, and perseverance, may not only rise from obscurity, but from a more degrading situation. Low, poor, and vulgar as she had been in her early days, she was always anxious to acquire education and knowledge; and though the theatrical profession might be thought to engross all her time and attention, she contrived to attain the French language, which she not only read, but spoke with facility.

Whatever relations she might have had, though I only heard of her father, have doubtless long since been dead, and most of her private friends also; so that I have the stronger reason to hold forth a lesson to those on whose birth fortune does not smile, to encourage them to exert their powers in order to improve their condition. As a proof how high she must have risen on the stage, and in public opinion, Sir Joshua Reynolds painted a whole-length portrait of her; and another in kit-cat size, gratuitously, as a tribute to her professional excellence, from both of which engravings have been made; and she was also the subject of many other prints.

As an actress, Mrs. Abington was distinguished for spirit and humour, rather than for high-breeding and elegance. She excelled in the delivery of sarcastic humour, to which the shrewdness of her mind and the tartness of her tone gave the most effective piquancy. Her manners were not sufficiently graceful and well-bred for Congreve's "Millimont" altogether, but in those passages where she taunts Marwood, there was a stinging severity in her delivery that would have fully satisfied the author. Beatrice has more wit and pertness than good-breeding, and in that part she was excellent; and also in Estifania, another character that demands vivacity and humour, not elegance. She was the first Lady Teazle, and that character was admirably suited to her talents. It was understood that she was well acquainted with the French authors, and could converse in Italian. She was received in many good families as an admired companion. When or why she married, I know not. Her husband, I understood, was a musician. They had been separated many years, and it was reported that she allowed him an annuity not to molest her.

I once saw Mr. Abington at a dinner which my late friend Dr. Arnold gave at Parsloe's, in St. James's-street; but as the company was numerous, I could not get near enough to hear what he said. He seemed to be a smart-looking little man, lively in his conversation,

and apparently the object of attention to those who were near him. There was a report of his death, and she sent her and my old friend, Mr. Cooke, the barrister, to me, to ascertain the fact, but I could not give him any information on the subject; it is probable that she survived him.

I met Mrs. Abington one evening at Mrs. Conway's in Stratford Place, where she was treated with much respect by the company; but she chiefly confined her conversation to General Paoli, who seemed to be much gratified by her spirit and intelligence. I afterward dined in company with her at the house of Mrs. Jordan, the celebrated actress, in Cadogan Place. Mrs. Abington displayed great spirit, and enlivened the company with many interesting anecdotes of theatrical history, as well as of fashionable life, with which she had been intimately connected during the zenith of her fame; but the chief part of her conversation related to Mr. Garrick, of whom she seemed never likely to be tired of talking. She spoke of his theatrical merits with enthusiasm. In speaking of the powerful effect of his eyes, she said that whatever expression they assumed, they seemed to operate by fascination; and that in all her intercourse with the world she never beheld eyes that had so much expression, brilliancy, and force. She finally observed that, if she might presume to give an opinion, she would say Shakspeare was made for Garrick, and Garrick for Shakspeare.

Miss Fitzclarence was of this party, and a more unaffected, amiable, and agreeable young lady I never met. She was accompanied by Mrs. Cockle, who was some time her governess. Mrs. Cockle has published several poems, and some tracts on education, which are highly creditable to her talents and character.

It is bare justice to add, that our lively hostess, Mrs. Jordan, never appeared to more advantage on the stage, with all her original talents, than when she did the honours of her hospitable board, and exerted herself to gratify her guests with her sprightliness and good-humour. As she found in me a sincere friend, not a flatterer, she favoured me with her confidence, and intrusted me with the letters which she had received from a high character, after an unexpected separation, in order to convince me that nothing in her own conduct had occasioned that separation.

To return to Mrs. Abington. As she had no powerful comic rival before Miss Farren, the late Countess of Derby, rose into popular favour, she might have acquired a considerable fortune; [but according to report, she was ambitious of associating with persons of quality, and became acquainted with some old ladies of fashion, with whom she was tempted to play high at cards, and as they were as skilful in acting the parts of gamblers, as she was in any of the characters which she personated on the stage, she is said to have suffered severely by their superior dexterity. I remember her keeping a very elegant carriage, and living in a large mansion in Clarges-street; but as she advanced in life, she became less fit for those characters in



which she had chiefly distinguished her talents, and, of course, was less likely to secure an engagement with the theatrical managers.\*

I regret to say, that the last time I saw her on the stage, I thought I perceived a great falling off in her theatrical powers, and a poor substitution of a kind of vulgar humour and grimace for her former vivacity and genius. In the meridian of her days she was admired for her taste in dress, but I learned from some good female judges, that she declined in that respect also, and that a gaudy parade appeared instead of her former elegance of attire. The last time I saw her, after she left the stage, was at the house of her old friend Mr. Nealson, who was stock-broker to the banking-house of Messrs. Coutts and Co. and also to that of Snow and Co. near Temple Bar. Mr. Nealson was alarmingly ill, and attended by Dr. Blaine. I had called to inquire how he was, for he was too ill to admit visitors; and as I was departing I met Mrs. Abington in the passage, who came for the same purpose. She seemed to be under the influence of extraordinary prudery, her reign of gallantry having long passed by, and declined telling her name to the servant, but desired the master might be merely told that the *gentlewoman* had called to inquire after his health. As I knew the high regard that Nealson had for her, I pressed her to leave her name, as I was sure that such an attention on her part would sooth his sufferings, and perhaps promote his recovery. She was inflexible, and watched me lest I should disclose her name. I hastily returned to the servant, as if to deliver another message, and whispered "Mrs. Abington." "I know it, sir," said the woman, and I parted with Mrs. Abington at the door.

It would hardly have been in the power of anybody who had known her in her better days, to recognise her person at that time. She had on a common red cloak, and her general attire seemed to indicate the wife of an inferior tradesman, and the whole of her demeanour was such as might be expected from a woman of that rank. It is with pleasure I add, that she must have been in easy circumstances on her retirement from the stage, as she lived in Pall Mall, where I once visited her previous to my meeting her at the house of Mr. Nealson, who soon after died, leaving her and my old friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, 100*l.* each, and 50*l.* to each of the theatrical funds.

Indeed it was well known that she had an income from a deceased nobleman, once eminent in the political world, which terminated at

\* As a proof that she began to feel her attraction, if not her faculties, were declining, she was induced to perform the part of Scrub, on one of her benefit nights. I was present, and remember nothing in her performance that might not have been expected from an actor of much inferior abilities. As a proof too that like many of her profession, she thought herself capable of characters not within the scope of her powers, I once saw her play Ophelia to Mr. Garrick's Hamlet; and to use a simile of my old friend Dr. Monsey, she appeared "like a mackerel on a gravel-walk." My late friend Mr. Sayers published a whole-length etching of her in Scrub, which was very like her. He also published one of Miss Farren, in the heroine of Mr. Pratt's tragedy, "The Fair Circassian," considering her as unfit for tragic characters, however excellent in comic parts or those of domestic tenderness.

his death. His immediate successor annulled it, but as he died soon after, the next successor generously restored it, from a regard to the memory of his father. I never heard that the theatrical fraternity attended the funeral of Mrs. Abington, as is usual on the death of even the lower order of their community, male and female; neither do I know when she died, or where she was buried.

MISS FARREN. With this actress I never had the pleasure of being personally acquainted, but I met her one morning with Lord Derby at the house of the late Mr. Kemble. She seemed to be lively and intelligent, with less affectation than might reasonably be expected in a fine lady who had a prospect of elevated rank. According to report, she was the daughter of a military officer, who died when she was young, and left his widow in distress. Miss Farren was first known as connected with a theatre at Birmingham, where Mr. Younger, a respectable actor, was the manager. She was then very young, and only employed in the most trifling parts; and I heard from a lady who was engaged in the same company, that Miss Farren had so small a salary, that she had a weekly stipend from four of the female performers for carrying to the theatre what is styled their properties, which means articles of dress, ornaments, &c. &c. She conducted herself with great propriety, and gradually improved in the opinion of the manager, who at length procured her an engagement at the Haymarket theatre, under the management of the elder Mr. Colman.

It would be unbecoming in me to enter into a criticism on her talents, as they are so well known, and were so justly admired by the public. She was lively and elegant, and only wanted the satirical point and spirit of Mrs. Abington, which, after all, is perhaps a vulgar quality; but she had what Mrs. Abington never possessed, and that was pathos. The character which she performed in "The Chapter of Accidents" may be cited, as well as many others, to show that in parts of genuine sensibility she could make a powerful appeal to the sympathy of the audience. At length, like Miss Fenton, the first Polly in "The Beggar's Opera," she was destined to assume a high rank, which by all accounts she supported as if she had been "to the manner born," and was esteemed as one of the chief ornaments in the circle of nobility.

---

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

MR. HOLMAN. This gentleman was an intimate friend of mine, till I happened to disapprove of the leading part which he took in opposition to the manager and chief proprietor of Covent Garden theatre. Eight of the chief performers entered into a compact, and were styled "The Glorious Eight" by those actors who approved



of the combination. I wrote to Mr. Holman on the subject, reminding him that, in a former difference with the same proprietor, on his restoration to the theatre, he had emphatically assured me that he never would quarrel with a London manager again. He sent me a very friendly answer, promising to call on me, and to justify his conduct on the occasion in question to my satisfaction. I waited with some concern for his visit, but he did not call; and while I was talking in the street one morning with Mr. Charles Kemble, he passed us, saluted Mr. Kemble, and took no notice of me.

As all the other performers concerned in the combination, in turn, to use a modern phrase, "cut me" in the same manner, I began to be irritated, particularly as Mr. Harris, the manager, had at first requested that I would take up his cause, and signified that I should be well rewarded for my trouble. I positively refused to have any concern in the affair, alleging that, though I disapproved of the conduct of the parties, yet as I was personally acquainted with them all, and was intimate with some of them, I was resolved not to take any part against them. But rendered indignant by the slights which I received from them, I wrote a series of letters in a morning paper of which I was then proprietor, under the signature of "An Old Observer," in which I condemned their proceedings, and to the best of my abilities used the weapon of ridicule, as well as of argument, against them.

The result of their appeal to the lord chamberlain was adverse to their cause; they therefore found it necessary to make their peace with the manager, and in due time with me also—for they all made advances to me, either personally or by deputy. Munden and Ingleton swore that they would not be at variance with "Jack Taylor," and made friendly overtures to me as soon as we met; and the rest, in general, followed their example. The late Mr. John Kemble, whose mind was liberal, invited me to dine with him, and placed me and Mr. Fawcett on each side of him, at the head of the table, for the purpose of restoring harmony between us. Mr. Fawcett asked me to take a glass of wine with him, to which I readily assented; and an amicable feeling on both sides was immediately renewed, and we have since enjoyed many a hearty laugh together.

One night, the late Mr. Lewis, as I was behind the scenes of Covent Garden theatre, asked me if I had any objection to shake hands with Mr. Knight, who had desired him to make the proposal. I, of course, readily complied, and we were immediately reconciled on the spot. Another evening, when I was in the lobby of the theatre, Mr. Morton, the successful dramatic author, and a most friendly man, addressed me in a similar manner, telling me that Mr. Holman was in the next box, and was anxious to be on good terms with me; and in consequence of my answer Mr. Holman came forward, and cordiality was completely restored between us. I subsequently wrote prologues and epilogues for his dramatic pieces, and no trace of variance existed on the part of either.

To none of the members of this opposition to the manager did I

ever make the least advance towards reconciliation, except to the late Mr. Johnstone, generally called Jack Johnstone, the admirable singer and performer of Irish characters ; and that overture, on my part, arose from an accidental meeting. I had waited on the Hon. William Wellesley Pole, now Lord Maryborough, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted, and was expecting him in a private apartment at the Admiralty, when that nobleman was the secretary, and in a few moments Mr. Johnstone was introduced into the same room. We walked about the apartment, and took no notice of each other, though we had once been upon very friendly terms. At length, wishing for the restoration of amity, I said : "Mr. Johnstone, as some years have passed since there was any ground for a difference between us, I do not see why we should not shake hands." He immediately advanced, shook me by the hand, and said : "It is very odd that a mutual friend of ours this day said to me—'I must bring about a reconciliation between you and Jack Taylor;' and I am glad that there is no reason to wait for his intervention." Johnstone then desired me to accompany him to Covent Garden, took me into the Piazza Coffee-house, where a subscription was opened to relieve the sufferers by the destruction of Covent Garden theatre by fire, and requested that I would subscribe a guinea, to which I most willingly assented. I have since often met Johnstone at the hospitable table of my old friend Mr. Const, the chairman of the Middlesex sessions, where Johnstone's humour, high spirits, and musical talents, rendered him at all times the life of the company.

Johnstone particularly excelled in singing Irish songs, and several, I believe, were written for him by my friend George Colman the younger. Whenever Johnstone was asked to sing in company, he at once complied, and there was a *naïveté* in his manner that gave effect to every point. He was the only actor within my memory who was equally effective and successful in representing the lower orders of Irishmen and Irish gentleman: the former he portrayed with humorous fidelity, and in the latter he was eminently successful.

Moody had great merit in performing low Irish characters ; but he was always heavy and sluggish in representing those of a higher order. Johnstone was also equally successful in representing those parts that occupied a middle rank, and were neither low nor high—such as Foigard, and Kendrick in "The Heir at Law:" in the last part he displayed a touching and unaffected sensibility. There was a shrewdness in his conversation which indicated strongly his knowledge of mankind ; and an archness and waggery in his manner which evidently resulted from that knowledge. He was capable of a sincere and lasting friendship.

His accuracy in representing the higher order of Irish was the effect of his intercourse with persons of high rank in this country and in Ireland. He had been frequently honoured with the countenance of his late majesty, when Prince of Wales, and invited to the royal parties : a proof that he must have been a well-bred man, or he never could have been in the company of a prince distinguished by a union



of ease, affability, and dignity, of which there are perhaps few parallels in the civilized world. Mr. Johnstone was very prudent in pecuniary concerns, from a knowledge of the uncertainty of human affairs and the instability of fortune, and was reputed to be very wealthy; but the property which he left was much inferior to what rumour had ascribed to him, and evidently proved that he was not of so saving a disposition as had been generally supposed.

He left, as I was told by one of his confidential friends, about 18,000*l.*; a vast property, when we consider that he kept a good-sized house in a conspicuous situation, two maid-servants and generally a male attendant, and that he often entertained his friends. His companionable qualities, as well as his musical talents, rendered him an attractive object, and though there was a familiar spirit in his manner, he was always well bred. His last illness, I understood, was not very painful; and his amiable daughter, Mrs. Wallack, informed me, that as she sat on his bed, holding his hand, his death was so easy that he expired without her being sensible of it. His health was in general good. He was twice severely afflicted by a disorder in his eyes, from which my departed brother and myself had the pleasure of entirely relieving him.

MR. QUICK. This gentleman is one of my early theatrical acquaintances, and, I may add, of my oldest friends. He is still alive, but in a very advanced age. He lives at Islington, and is a constant, yet a sober visiter of a neighbouring tavern, where his good sense and knowledge of the world, and his lively disposition, excite the attention and esteem of his company. By genuine comic talents, and a strong sense of humour, he was able to triumph over a very peculiar voice, which few who might be in the same situation would have been so resolute as to deem fit for the stage; but his intellectual powers, and his attentive observation of mankind in all states and conditions, and his general excellence in discriminating and supporting characters brought him into great popularity, and he became one of the chief comic performers in the opinion of our late excellent monarch George the Third.

Mr. Quick was not only admirable in rustic characters, but in those of a higher order, where pride and arrogance were to be represented. He was also an exact observer, and most effective representative of the middle classes of life. He always superadded an arch and sly humour, such as a dramatic author cannot give to his original design; but must leave to the critical conception, and if I may be permitted to use such a word, the *elongating* humour of the actor. Mr. Quick announced his intention of performing the part of Richard the Third for one of his annual benefits, and, meeting him before the benefit took place, I observed that I supposed he intended to burlesque the character, as his predecessor Shuter had done on a similar occasion. I was surprised to find that he was perfectly serious, and I attended the performance. He supported the part with good sense and judgment throughout, but the peculiarity of his voice occasionally broke forth with such comic effect, that the audience, with all their respect

for his talents and character, could not help giving way to ludicrous emotions.

Mr. Quick was of too liberal a disposition to feel the least envy towards any of his contemporaries, but, on the contrary, was most ready to acknowledge their merits. I remember once asking him what he thought of Shuter, who was dead, and of whom I had seen but little, admired as he was, and by all accounts justly deemed one of the best comic actors that ever existed. Mr. Quick was lavish in his praise, and concluded with saying that "he was all honey," by which expression I inferred that all was smooth, sweet, and delicious in his acting. Mr. Quick has a son, an attorney by profession, and a daughter, married to Mr. Davenport, a translator and teacher of languages, a very respectable man, who has published some learned and valuable works.

As long as Mr. Quick's strength would enable him, he every day visited his daughter, walking from Islington to Doctor's Commons. He voluntarily resigned a good situation and salary at Covent Garden theatre, because he would not be called upon to act more than three times a week; and as it was impossible that any dramatic writer would think of bringing forward a comedy at Covent Garden theatre without providing a part for Mr. Quick, the late Mr. Harris, then chief proprietor and manager, properly alleged that if a new comedy was successful, and likely to have a run, such a condition as that of only performing three nights a week must interrupt its course, and be injurious to the theatre as well as to the author. Mr. Quick, however, considering his age, and having obtained a comfortable independence, was inexorable, and relinquished the connexion.

After his retirement, he told me that as he had never formally taken leave of the stage, he had some notion of taking a farewell benefit, as many actors and actresses had done; but not having done so, I conclude that, being easy at home, he would not subject himself to the suspicion of acting the part of Lovegold in reality, which he had so admirably performed when he was on the stage.—Mr. Quick was always esteemed for his conduct and character in private life, and was the life of the green-room for his good-humour and unoffending waggery.

MR. TERRY. This gentleman was originally intended for the profession of an architect, and I have been assured that his architectural drawings were scientific and elegant in a high degree. When he determined on a theatrical life, he gave all these drawings to his friends. When we became acquainted, I asked him if he had one left. He told me that they were all gone, but were of so trifling a kind that they would not be worth my acceptance. None of his friends, however, thought so, and held these proofs of his taste and genius in great value. He was a very intelligent man and an excellent actor. His voice was harsh and monotonous, but his conceptions were so just, and his acting so determined and appropriate, that he was deservedly a favourite with the public. He appeared to most advantage in characters of a sarcastic turn, and there was some-



thing of the same tendency in his conversation. He was very conversant with the old dramatic writers of this country, insomuch that my late friend William Gifford, having heard of his knowledge in this respect, desired I would submit to his judgment a passage which he found difficult, when he had nearly concluded his new edition of Ben Jonson's works. The passage was equally difficult to Mr. Terry, and therefore, it is probable, has been covered by the mist of time.

Mr. Terry, as might naturally be concluded, was an enthusiastic admirer of Shakspeare, of whose monument in the church of Stratford-upon-Avon he had a large copy, and which was so placed in his house as to be out of danger from accident or careless servants. This effigy of the great bard was, I understand, the object of his daily contemplation.

Mr. Terry first appeared in London upon the Haymarket stage, but his merit soon transferred him to Covent Garden and Drury-lane theatres, where his reputation considerably increased on account of the variety of characters which he represented, in all of which he displayed great merit. He married a daughter of Mr. Nasmyth, an artist of distinction in Edinburgh. Mrs. Terry is a lady of admired talents in the same province of art.

Mr. Terry was a very judicious critic, theatrical and otherwise. As he was for many years in particular intimacy with Sir Walter Scott, it may be easily conceived that he was respected for knowledge and talents. It is deeply to be lamented that he should, in the prime of life, and in the height of popularity, have been obliged to retire on account of pecuniary difficulties, the result, according to report, of an unfortunate attachment to the gaming-table; for with an amiable, a prudent, and affectionate wife, it is impossible to suppose that his embarrassments could be the consequence of any domestic extravagance. His death was really a loss to the public, as well as to his friends, as he has not left any adequate successor in the characters in which he was chiefly successful.

Mr. Terry displayed dramatic as well as theatrical talents, for it is generally understood that he introduced some of the popular novels of his friend Sir Walter Scott upon the stage. I have two letters from Mr. Terry addressed to me, which I may, perhaps, annex to this work; though, as they are rather of a flattering description, I may probably bring my modesty into question; but, as my merits are but humble, it would be absurd indeed to hide my little light under a bushel.

**MR. EMERY.** No one, within my remembrance, was so natural in the representation of rustic characters. There was a simplicity in his manner that had all the effect of reality. In all boorish parts he seemed as if he had just come upon the stage immediately from the plough, or the side of a wagon. But his rustic range was wider, for he could perform clowns of the arch and roguish kind with equal correctness, and also parts of determined villany, in which there were traits of remorse. A part of this description, in one of my friend Morton's comedies, was written on purpose for him, and was

rendered by him one of the main props of the piece. He possessed musical knowledge in no slight degree, and performed on the violoncello with taste and skill; and it is, therefore, to be regretted, that he had not a voice which properly qualified him to take conspicuous parts in operas as well as plays. He was also a respectable artist, and I have a landscape in water-colours of his drawing, which displays the correctness and spirit of a regular professor. He was a modest man, and did not conceive himself qualified to assume any of Shakspeare's characters, insomuch that he wanted to relinquish the part of Caliban, though he had performed it with success.

Emery was of so convivial a turn, and his company so much courted, that on his death he left his family in adverse circumstances. Mr. George Robins of Covent Garden, a gentleman well known for humanity, as well as for his partiality for the drama and zeal and rectitude in his profession, immediately instituted a subscription for the support of the widow and children, and by his activity and perseverance was able to procure for them a comfortable provision. As I have referred to a character in "The Tempest," I cannot avoid adverting to the ignorant hostility of some part of the audience against Mr. Kemble for using *aches* as a dissyllable when he performed the part of Prospero; as he was not only authorized by the passage in the play, which rendered it absolutely necessary, but by Beaumont and Fletcher, Prior, and even by so late a writer as Swift.

During this foolish hostility I met Mr. Bensley, who used to perform the part. We talked on the subject, as it was then rife in the newspapers. "Mr. Kemble," said he, "was right: I used the word as he did when I first performed the part; but he was wrong in persevering to put the audience out of humour by his critical precision. I was hissed for pronouncing the word as he did; but, not disposed to sacrifice to the prejudice of ignorance, on the following night I omitted the line altogether." Having thus incidentally mentioned MR. BENSLEY, my respect for his memory as an actor and a gentleman induces me not to pass him over without a farther notice. He was an officer in the marines before he ventured on the theatrical boards; and was present, and not undistinguished, at the taking of the Havannah. He was a man of good sense, and had the advantage of a liberal education. As a proof that his intellectual powers were not of an ordinary description, he was intimate with Churchill, Lloyd, the elder Colman, and Bonnell Thornton. His voice was rough, and had no variety, or rather flexibility; but he was a very judicious actor, and in grave and moral characters very impressive. There was a dry sarcastic humour in his conversation which peculiarly fitted him for such characters as Scandal, in the comedy of "Love for Love," which he performed admirably. He was for many years deemed the best Pierre in "Venice Preserved," and was much respected for his performance of Iago, and of Evander in "The Grecian Daughter," after the death of Barry. At length being tired of a theatrical life, his friend Mr. Windham procured him the appoint-



ment of barrack-master; and soon after a near relation of the same name, who was a director of the East India Company, died and left him a very considerable fortune, amounting, according to report, to about 50,000*l*. He then retired to Stanmore, and lived happily with a very amiable wife, to whom he had been married many years.

Within a year or two of his death, I understood his mental powers deserted him, and rendered him totally unfit for society, but he enjoyed every comfort that conjugal affection could impart. He was very intimate with the late Lord Torrington and his family, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at his house while he continued to reside in London. He was highly esteemed by the theatrical community in general; and, if not familiar, was at least courteous to all of them, however humble in their station. It seems strange that his wealthy relation did not enable him to quit the stage when he was tired of it, but still suffered him to continue on it till Mr. Windham appointed him a barrack-master. He must have known that, though his salary enabled him to live like a gentleman, he could not do so without strict, if not severe prudence. This relation, indeed, bequeathed to him a large fortune, but what gratitude can be due to a man who gives what is no longer his own, and who loses the pleasure of seeing the effects of his friendship or benevolence, and of witnessing the happiness which he is able to confer on worthy objects, for the despicable enjoyment of undiminished affluence?

---

## CHAPTER XXXV.

LEWIS, a provincial actor. This actor I knew in my early days. He was no relation to the admirable comic actor who was so long one of the main props of Covent Garden theatre. The person whom I now mention was a provincial performer well known, but particularly at Liverpool, when the theatre was under the management of Mr. Younger, who had been engaged for a few seasons at Covent Garden theatre. Lewis was an old man when I knew him. He had a turn for poetry, and published a few of his effusions with the following poetical motto:—

*The Muses forced me to besiege 'em,  
Necessitas non habet legem.*

He was generally known by the title of "The King of Grief," as he had watery eyes, which made him always appear to be weeping, and as he was continually predicting misery to himself. As he was a harmless man, and possessed of literary talents, he was treated kindly by his professional brethren, and had some share in an annual benefit.

On one occasion, when the benefit had been very productive to him, he was congratulated on his success. Instead of evincing his own satisfaction, he began crying, and said, "Ah! I shall not be so lucky next year." Mr. Younger, who was a very friendly man, invited old Lewis to dine with him at Liverpool. Lewis declined the invitation, alleging the indifferent state of his attire. Mr. Younger desired him to go into the wardrobe of the theatre, and gave orders that he should receive any suit of clothes that fitted him. As soon as he was properly accommodated, he rejoined Mr. Younger at dinner. After a few glasses of wine, which instead of raising his spirits depressed him, he began weeping. Mr. Younger, with great kindness, asked him the cause of his sudden grief; "Why," said he, "is it not lamentable to think that such a man of genius as myself should be obliged to such a stupid fellow as you are for a suit of clothes and a dinner?" Far from being offended, Mr. Younger only laughed at his ludicrous and untimely ingratitude.

**DAGGER MARR.** This actor was on the stage in the earlier days of Garrick. I saw him at my father's when I was very young. He had then retired from the stage, but being an intelligent man he lived in respectable society. Whether he was honoured with the epithet of "Dagger" on account of his being generally employed in representing murderers, or whether it was really his Christian name, I never heard; and it is hardly likely that any of the theatrical tribe are now old enough to remember.\*

It appears that he had full confidence in his own theatrical merit; for one night when Garrick was performing *Ranger*, and was running off the stage with *Jacintha*, he stumbled against Marr, who stood too near and was pushed aside. Looking after Garrick, and thinking he was out of hearing, Marr folded his arms and was heard to say to himself, "*Ranger*!—give me but your eyes and I will play *Ranger* with you for any sum." Garrick's eyes, indeed, were generally allowed to be most brilliant and piercing.

Marr had a turkey presented to him, and meeting a friend as he was carrying it through the streets, he was asked what he was going to do with it. He said he was going to present it to Mr. Garrick. His friend told him that Mr. Garrick would not accept it. Marr, however, determined to persevere. Mr. Garrick declined the offer, observing that he had plenty of turkeys at Hampton, and desiring him to keep it for his own family. Marr however was so pressing that, rather than mortify him, Mr. Garrick agreed to accept it. On

\* My friend Mr. Const related to me a circumstance which perhaps may be considered conclusive that "Dagger" was a name given to him in ridicule. It is well known that Garrick used to practise his gestures before a glass, particularly when he had to utter a soliloquy. One day when Marr was waiting for Garrick in his dressing-room, he went before the glass and repeated the following passage in the tragedy of *Macbeth*:—"Is this a dagger that I see before me?" throwing himself into a tragic attitude, and was so well pleased with his own performance that he exclaimed, "Well done—better than Garrick!" Garrick had, unperceived, entered the room, and walking softly up to Marr, tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Well done, Dagger."



his return Marr met the same friend, who asked him if Mr. Garrick had taken the turkey. "Taken it?" said Marr, "ay, he would have taken it if it had been a roll and treacle."

The odd misanthropic humour of Marr, as his conduct was in general correct, never offended his brethren of the stage, and was entirely thrown aside when he quitted it. My father described him as a well-informed man of gentlemanly manners.

It is well known that Garrick was fond of playing sportive tricks upon his friends, and this disposition is alluded to by Goldsmith in his "Retaliation." One afternoon, when he expected Dr. Monsey to call on him, he desired the servant to conduct the doctor into his bedroom. Garrick was announced for King Lear on that night, and when Monsey saw him in bed he expressed his surprise, and asked him if the play was to be changed. Garrick was dressed, but had his night-cap on, and the quilt was drawn over him, to give him the appearance of being too ill to rise. Monsey expressed his surprise, as it was time for Garrick to be at the theatre to dress for King Lear. Garrick, in a languid and whining tone, told him that he was too much indisposed to perform himself, but that there was an actor named Marr, so like him in figure, face, and voice, and so admirable a mimic, that he had ventured to trust the part to him, and was sure that the audience would not perceive the difference. Monsey in vain expostulated with him on the hazard which he would incur of public displeasure, as it was impossible that the attempt should succeed. Garrick pretended to be worse, and requested Monsey to leave the room that he might get a little sleep, but desired him to attend the theatre and let him know the result. As soon as the doctor quitted the room, Garrick jumped out of bed and hastened to the theatre. Monsey, partly in compliance with Garrick's desire, and partly from curiosity to witness so extraordinary an experiment, attended the performance. Having left Garrick in bed, Monsey was bewildered by the scene before him, sometimes doubting, and sometimes being astonished at the resemblance between Garrick and Marr. At length, finding that the audience were convinced of Garrick's identity, Monsey began to suspect that a trick had been practised upon him, and hurried to Garrick's house at the end of the play; but Garrick was too quick for him, and had resumed his situation in bed: having drawn the quilt over part of the dress of King Lear which he had not time to remove, he was found by Monsey in the same apparent state of illness. Some friends of Garrick, who had been let into the secret, and were present at the performance, witnessed and enjoyed the perplexity of Monsey during the whole. As Monsey himself was inclined to play tricks with his friends, this whimsical deception was deemed but retributive justice on the part of Garrick, and Monsey the next day shared in the laugh at his own expense, determining however to retaliate, and he probably revenged himself on the first opportunity. No persons could take more liberties with each other than Garrick and Monsey, and none could be more prolific in prompt and facetious abuse.

PARSONS. I had the pleasure of knowing this actor, who was one of the best comic performers within my remembrance. He began the profession with true comic humour, which, combined with great observation of the living world, enabled him to become an exact representative of the characters within the province of his powers. He was originally a true natural actor, but without losing sight of nature, he latterly seemed disposed to reduce acting to a system. He told anecdotes without labour and with strong effect. I observed him particularly in company, and have heard him examine a story when related by another, as a mechanic would examine the structure of an instrument, noticing in a low voice the several parts of the narrative, whether sly, ironical, sarcastic, or ludicrous, yet not in such a manner as to disturb the narrator.

His foresight was admirable; and here I may properly notice the variations of fashion, for the very dress that Wilks, a celebrated actor in the time of Betterton and Booth, used to wear when he performed Sir Harry Wildair, was identically the same as that which Parsons wore in Foresight. He was excellent in clowns, drunken men, and old coxcombs, and always contented himself with what the author had written. He was somewhat of a cynical disposition in general, but, though warm, never intentionally rough to individuals. The public hardly need be reminded of his excellence in Crabtree, and Sir Fretful Plagiary.

He had skill in landscape-painting, was very fond of pictures, and particularly of the works of Wilson, of which I have seen some of his copies, which displayed considerable merit.

EDWIN. This actor was another proof of the vicissitudes of public taste. When he first appeared at the Haymarket theatre, in the time of Foote, in one of the plays written by that author, Edwin had so much of the grimace of a country actor, so disagreeable a voice, such an uncouth form, and such a shambling gait, that he made a very unfavourable impression, and was actually hissed when I was in the theatre. Yet he gradually grew upon the audience, and at last became one of the chief comic favourites of the public, particularly in the whimsical farces of Mr. O'Keefe, in several of which characters were designed expressly for him, and he fully executed the design of the author. In private life he was a coarse vulgar man, much addicted to drinking and swearing, seldom, if ever, uttering a sentence without an oath.

MOODY. I was but slightly acquainted with this actor, yet what I knew of him convinced me that he was a very shrewd man, but too fond of money. He, indeed, made no scruple to acknowledge himself a miser. A friend of his, named Barford, whom I knew, called on him one day in summer and found him cutting wood. Barford offered to help him, and devoted an hour or two to that occupation, even during the heat of the day. At length he became thirsty, and asked Moody for some beer. Moody fetched a bottle, drew the cork, and gave Barford a tumbler-full. He then put the cork in, and was going to take it away. Barford stopped him, and said he should



want more. "I own," replied Moody, "you have deserved it, but it goes to my heart to give it you."—He once lent money to Mr. Brereton the actor. Brereton did not return it immediately, and Moody waited with some degree of patience. At length the first time Moody met him, he looked earnestly at him, and vented a kind of noise between a sigh and a groan. He repeated this interjection whenever he met Brereton, who at length was so annoyed, that he put his hand in his pocket and paid him. Moody took the money, and with a gentler aspect, said, "Did I ask you for it, Billy?"

I dined with him once at Mr. Kemble's when he began to exhibit signs of age. Mr. Kemble during the whole time called him Gaffer, and a more appropriate appellation could hardly have been given to him, as he displayed a kind of venerable rustic aspect. He mingled little in conversation, but during a pause suddenly broke out into an anecdote of a ludicrous kind, which diverted the company, and he then relapsed into silence. He had been a handsome man. His features were regular and expressive, but his person was stout and heavy. He had a powerful and well-toned voice. In low Irish character he had no competitor in his day, and Churchill pays a liberal compliment to him and his country in "The Rosciad." His knowledge of the world, and good sense, enabled him to do justice to all the characters he represented; but as he became larger in person, he grew sluggish and torpid in his acting. His manners were not suited to the Irish gentleman, and though he acted with strength and effect, his Major O'Flaherty was much surpassed by the late Mr. Johnstone, who, if he did not exceed Moody in Foigard, was fully equal to him.

Moody's Sir Sampson Legend was an admirable performance. I sat once with Dr. Wolcot at "Love for Love," and he said he thought it the most perfect assumption of character he had ever seen. His Adam, in "As You Like It," was much admired, but by his accent he certainly made Adam an Irishman. He lived on Barnes Common, on retiring from the stage, and dated his letter to the eight performers who had entered into opposition to the manager of Covent Garden theatre, from "an obscure corner of the Thames." He encouraged them to persevere, and ludicrously said in his letter, "Do ye want any money?" though, if they had, he was probably the last person from whom they could have reason to expect it. He grew at last so negligent in his acting, that his Major Oldfox was a mass of torpid languor; and when he appeared in one of the witches in "Macbeth," his boots were plainly seen under her petticoats. The last time I ever saw him was at the late Mr. Weltje's, at Hammer-smith, where he called as he went to Shepherd's Bush, his last residence. The conversation happened to turn on Mr. Sheridan, who was then alive, and who survived Moody. Some considerable arrears of salary had been due to Moody, who had threatened to go to Stafford, for which Sheridan was then a candidate, and to state his case to the electors. He then soon obtained his money.

The conversation, as I have observed, turning upon Sheridan the last time I saw Moody, he said, "I have the highest respect for Mr.

Sheridan ; I honour his talents, and would do any thing to show my friendship for him, but take his word." Having seen him nearly in the prime of life, I was shocked, at this last meeting, to see the vast alteration in his person. His handsome manly countenance was pallid, wrinkled, and cadaverous. His robust frame had become feeble, and he required help in walking, but I saw in his notice of Mr. Sheridan, that his master passion, the love of money, had by no means partaken of his general decay.

The earlier part of his theatrical life had been passed in Jamaica, and being accustomed to the manners of the negroes, the part of Mungo was originally intended for him ; but Dibdin, the author of "The Padlock," wished to perform it himself, and it was impossible that anybody could have performed it with more spirit, humour, and character. The afterpiece itself was the most popular within my remembrance. It had the support originally of the elder Bannister, Vernon, Dibdin, and Mrs. Arne, wife of Michael Arne, who was esteemed the best singer of her time, but who unhappily died in early life.

---

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

**CHARLES MACKLIN.** I knew this actor in the decline of his life, or rather in his old age. He was a man of an irritable disposition, but very civil and affable when not contradicted. The first time I had any personal intercourse with him was in the front boxes of Covent Garden theatre. He was accustomed to express his opinions aloud, if any thing struck him on the stage. In that audible manner he said something which did not appear to me to be well-founded, and I ventured to express a different opinion ;—the partition of the boxes only between us. Whether he assented to my opinion, and was too proud to concur, or whether his irascible temper resented my forwardness, I know not, but he immediately raised his voice loud enough to be heard all over the theatre, and said—"Write down what you have said, sir, and I will answer it." I was awed into silence, for two reasons,—one, because I was really too diffident to answer this vociferous speech of the veteran ; and the other, because I was afraid that people at a distance might suppose I had insulted him ; I therefore made no reply.

Some years after this, I met him at the house of Merlin, the great mechanic, in Prince's-street, Hanover-square. Merlin attended him with great respect, and displayed all his curious mechanical works to him. Macklin was delighted, and seemed to be particularly gratified with a stool on which he turned himself about with ease ; and he uttered many humorous sallies on the occasion. When he had sufficiently diverted the persons present, and gratified his own curiosity



with the extraordinary skill and ingenuity which all Merlin's works displayed, Macklin quitted his moveable seat, and, looking at Merlin, uttered these words, with a gravity almost solemn: "Sir, if I were a despotic monarch, I would have you confined in a room; I would supply all your wants and wishes; I should then say to you, for the benefit of mankind, *THINK!*" The last word he pronounced in the most emphatic manner, and then retired respectfully from the company. The beginning of this speech, and the awful manner in which it was delivered, for a moment seemed to terrify Merlin, but the complimentary conclusion evidently gave him much pleasure.

When Macklin was announced for *Macbeth*, at Covent Garden theatre, my father's old friend, Mr. Brooke, told me he would write to Macklin for an order, and that if I would take it, I should go with him to the play. I took the note, which contained a request for an order for his old friend Jemmy Brooke. Macklin wrote an answer in my presence, which I well recollect was in the following words:—

"Mr. Macklin presents his compliments to his old friend Jemmy Brooke. He always valued the man, and the pleasure of thinking he was his friend; wishes to increase the idea, and begs he will accept the enclosed order for two."

I remember to have dined with Macklin at the house of a clergyman named Clarke, who had paid Opie for a portrait of him. The Rev. Mr. Whalley, the editor of the works of Ben Jonson and of Beaumont and Fletcher, was of the party. This learned, intelligent, and pleasant gentleman, who, I believe, was one of the masters of Merchant Tailors' School, was afterward, as I understood, obliged to leave this country, having, like myself, been ensnared by a false friend to accept bills which he was unable to discharge. I am afraid that this respectable gentleman, acute critic, and agreeable companion, was never able to return to England. I remember that though the party was made chiefly on account of Macklin, he said, that if a man was thought of importance enough to have his portrait painted, he ought to be paid for lending his features. Whether this remark was intended as a hint to our host, I know not, but it illustrates the rough and interested character of Macklin.

The character of *Macbeth* had been hitherto performed in the attire of an English general; but Macklin was the first who performed it in the old Scottish garb. His appearance was previously announced by the Coldstream March, which I then thought the most delightful music I had ever heard; and I never hear it now without most pleasing recollections. When Macklin appeared on the bridge, he was received with shouts of applause, which were repeated throughout his performance. I was seated in the pit, and so near the orchestra that I had a full opportunity of seeing him to advantage. Garrick's representation of the character was before my time; Macklin's was certainly not marked by studied grace of deportment; but he seemed to be more earnest in the character than any actor I have subsequently seen.

Here I must stop for a moment to say, that when Mr. John Kem-

ble first performed the part, he sent a note to me, requesting I would be present, saying, "*My soul and body on the action, both!*" I well recollect his performance. It was animated with more spirit than I had ever seen in his previous efforts; and they who saw his *Pierre*, after he resigned Jaffier, and in which he exhibited the most gallant ardour, may form some conception of his mode of expressing the fiery passages of *Macbeth*. I often saw him afterward in the same part, and ventured to tell him that he never equalled his first performance. "Why surely, Taylor," said he, "you must be wrong. What! do you think I have not improved in twenty years?" This, however, he said in perfect good-humour.

To return to Macklin. My friend Arthur Murphy admitted his want of grace, but contended for his correctness, judgment, and energy, happily styling his performance as "*a black-letter copy of Macbeth.*"

I attended his performance two nights after. A party had been raised against him, consisting, as reported, of the friends of Reddish; and he experienced a mixed reception, but applause predominated. He announced his intention of developing the conspiracy which had been raised against him, on his next appearance. I was again present. He came forward in his usual dress, and was well received. The audience called for a chair, on which he sat, and began his story. He offered however no satisfactory proof, and the audience began to murmur. He then said he had authority upon which he could confidently rely; and in a pathetic tone, putting his hand before his eyes as if he was shedding tears, said, "It was my wife." The audience then expressed their disapprobation, and would hear no more. He was, however, again announced for *Macbeth*; and desirous of witnessing the end of the affair, I went the third time. The opposing party had then gained the ascendant, and he was saluted with a violent hiss as soon as he appeared; and this hostility was so determined, that he went through the part in dumb show, for not a word could be heard; yet silence and applause attended all the other performers. I did not attend on the fourth night, but met a friend who had just left the theatre, and who told me that a board was brought forward on the stage, on which was written, "*Mr. Macklin is discharged from this theatre.*"

He had certainly given no provocation for this hostility, except to certain critics who presumed to think that he had no right to attempt a part so different from his usual style of acting. He discovered some of the party, brought an action against them, and they were cast. On hearing the verdict in the court, Macklin arose, and addressing the judge, declared that he did not seek for any damages, but only wished to vindicate his character, and to support the rights of his profession. The judge said: "Mr. Macklin, I have often admired your talents, but you have never acted better than on this occasion." After being discharged from Covent Garden theatre, Macklin went to Ireland, where, being a native of the country, and admired as an actor, he was well received.



Many years elapsed, when he returned to London, resumed his situation at that theatre, and appeared in his favourite part of Shylock. His memory, however, was evidently impaired; and after several attempts to repeat the character, he was at length obliged to relinquish the stage. Not having provided for old age, he was in danger of being reduced to a necessitous condition, but his friend Arthur Murphy issued proposals for publishing by subscription his play of "The Man of the World," and the farce of "Love à la Mode," to which was prefixed a print of himself, from a very strong likeness by Opie. The subscription was warmly patronised, and I had the pleasure of contributing my mite on the occasion.

Macklin's devotion to the stage continued long after he had quitted it. He was, of course, indulged by the late Mr. Harris with the freedom of the theatre, when he frequently took his station in the first row of the pit; and if an actor's voice did not reach him, he was sure to get up, and in a commanding tone say, "Speak louder, sir, I cannot hear you." The actors, in general, tolerated his peculiarities, and he lived upon good terms with them. He had not, however, relinquished his dramatic pen; for he met me one day, and told me that he would fix a day when he would give me a beefsteak; that the windows should be shut and the door locked after dinner, and he would read to me a comedy which he had written. His increasing infirmities, however, prevented his making the appointment, and I therefore probably escaped from a trial of patience; for, as he was of an overbearing disposition, I should have been obliged to acquiesce in the propriety of all I was to hear, or expose myself to the violence of his temper.

His origin was doubtful; but I remember he told me, when I had become better acquainted with him, that when he first came to London, he went to a relation of his mother, who kept a public-house in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, where there were then but few houses, and, as I understood, acted as a waiter. Tired and ashamed of this situation, he returned to Ireland, and joined a strolling company of actors. At length he obtained a situation on the Dublin stage, and afterward in London. He told me that his first performance of Shylock was in Lord Lansdown's alteration of Shakspeare's play, which was brought forward under the title of "The Jew of Venice;" and that it was for his performance in this play that the following well-known couplet was written upon him:

This is the Jew  
That Shakspeare drew.

He said the pit was at that period generally attended by a more select audience than were to be seen there at the present time. As far as I can recollect, the following were his words:—"Sir, you then saw no red cloaks, and heard no pattens in the pit, but you saw merchants from the city with big wigs, lawyers from the Temple with big

wigs, and physicians from the coffee-houses with big wigs ; and the whole exhibited such a formidable grizzle as might well shake the nerves of actors and authors." His reputation being established, he was then engaged by Mr. Fleetwood for Drury-lane theatre.

Dr. Wolcot and I were one evening at the Rainbow in King-street, Covent Garden, a coffee-house where we used often to sup, when Macklin came into one of the boxes. As the doctor wanted to have some intercourse with the veteran, and as I was acquainted with him, we joined him, and were glad to find him in a talking mood. I found his memory much impaired, but he recollected facts, though he forgot names. My little acquaintance with theatrical history, however, enabled me to prompt him, and he told the following story nearly as I shall give it.

"Sir, I remember I once played the character of the boy who wears red breeches and offends his mother." "Jerry Blackaire, in 'The Plain Dealer,' I suppose," said I. "Yes, sir, that was the part. Well, sir, I played a great number of tricks to divert the audience ; and the chief part was played by the surly, fat fellow, whose name I have forgot." "Probably Quin, sir." "Ay, sir, that was the man. Well, sir, when I went into the green-room, the surly, fat man began to scold me, and told me that while I played my tricks, it was impossible to have a chaste scene with me. I told him that, different as our cast was, I had the public to please as well as himself. 'But, sir,' said he, you must get rid of your tricks.' I said I could not. 'But, sir,' said he, 'you shall.' By this time I was provoked, and said, 'You lie ;' upon which he threw an apple that he was mumbling into my face. Sir, I was a fighting cull in those days, and I paid him so well about the face that it swelled, and rendered him hardly articulate. He was obliged to go on the stage again, but he mumbled his part so much that he was hissed. He left the stage, and somebody went forward and said that he was suddenly taken ill. Whether he finished his part I don't remember, but I remember that at the end of the play he sent me a challenge, and said he should wait for me at the pillar in Covent Garden. But, sir, I was a pantomime cull in those days, and I sent word that I would come to him when the entertainment was over. But, sir, the manager, a sweet man, who was my great friend, resolved that nothing fatal should take place—I forget his name." "Probably Fleetwood, sir." "Ay, that was the man,—sent a message to the surly fellow at the pillar, and would make up a bed for me in the theatre for fear of consequences, and so the matter ended."

I remember this pillar in the middle of Covent Garden. It had a large golden ball at the top, which I afterward saw in Mr. Kemble's garden, in Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury. Yet Macklin lost the friendship of Fleetwood by joining in an opposition to his intention of reducing the salaries of his actors ; and this led finally to a rupture between Macklin and Garrick, though the latter behaved to him with great generosity, offering to divide his salary with him, on find-



ing that he could not restore him to Fleetwood's favour. The whole transaction is stated by Mr. Murphy in his life of Garrick, and all the papers are given which passed on the occasion. Macklin's case was drawn up by Mr. Corbyn Morris, a literary gentleman well known at that time, and Garrick's answer by Mr. Guthrie, the historian. It is strange that Garrick did not draw up his own case, as he did not want literary powers either in prose or in verse.

It is well known that Junius addressed a brutal letter to Garrick, on a suspicion that he had given an information to his majesty George the Third, that Junius would write no more. Garrick sent an answer to this letter in a very spirited yet respectful style. Junius's brief but abusive letter was not published at the time, but is seen in the last edition of Junius, in three volumes, including all the private correspondence between Junius and Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, and Junius and Wilkes, &c. ; but as the letter from Junius to Garrick was not published at the time, Garrick's answer never appeared. I understand that it will appear among the Garrick papers, which will most probably be published before the present work is put to press, and will show Garrick in a very favourable light.

I will now proceed with some further account of Macklin. He displayed the violence of his temper in thrusting his cane into the eye of Mr. Hallam, the uncle of Mrs. Mattocks, the admired comic actress. Mr. Hallam died in consequence of this wound, which perforated the brain, and Macklin was tried for the crime at the Old Bailey, but acquitted, because it did not proceed from *malice prepense*.

It was formerly the custom with the actors and many literary characters of the time, to walk in the piazzas of Covent Garden in the middle of the day, and then to adjourn to dinner at the Bedford and other coffee-houses in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Murphy assured me that he was present at the following scene. Foote was walking with one party of friends, and Macklin with another. Foote diverted his friends at the expense of Macklin, whom he not only turned into ridicule, but attacked his character on all points. Macklin was not less active in abusing Foote. This scene continued for some time, and the reciprocal attacks seemed to receive an additional stimulus as they passed each other. At length all the friends of both parties went away, and Foote and Macklin were left masters of the field ; but Murphy lingered after he had taken leave of Foote, merely to see how the combatants would treat each other. To his surprise, Foote advanced to Macklin, and said in an amicable manner, "Macklin, as we are left alone, suppose we take a beefsteak together." "With all my heart," said Macklin ; and they adjourned to the Bedford, as if they had been the best of friends. They afterward, however, came to an open rupture.

Both gave public readings, in which they introduced the most vindictive abuse of each other. My father used to attend them both. Macklin severely arraigned the moral character of Foote, and his

daring impudence in exposing private persons on the stage. Foote was sportive and inventive. Among other matters which my father told me of this warfare, he said Foote expressed his surprise that Macklin should have had a Latin quotation in his advertisement,—“but I have it,” said he : “when he was footman to a wild extravagant student at the university, and carried his master’s books to the pawnbroker’s, he probably picked up this quotation on the way.” After a pause, Foote added, “No, that could not be, for the fellow could not read at the time.” It hardly need be said that Macklin never was in that capacity. The belligerents, however, with all the solemnity on one side, and all the wit on the other, tired the town, raised the siege, and became good friends again.

Macklin was a severe father. He gave his daughter, indeed, an accomplished education, and for some years came annually from Dublin, his head-quarters, to play his Shylock and Sir Archy for her benefit ; but he always made her pay for the journey and his performance, and she was always obliged to lend her gold watch to a friend during his stay in London, lest he should insist upon having it, as he was too austere for her to dispute his will. Her figure was good, and her manner easy and elegant, but her face was plain, though animated by expression. She was a very sprightly actress, and drew from real life. Her character through life was not only unimpeached, but highly respected.

Churchill has described Macklin’s face in very coarse terms in his “Rosciad ;” and Quin said of him, “If God writes a legible hand, that fellow is a villain.” At another time, Quin had the hardihood to say to Macklin himself, “Mr. Macklin, by the *lines*—I beg your pardon, sir—by the *cordage* of your face, you should be hanged.”

In Shylock, in Sir Archy Macsarcasm, and in Sir Pertinax Mac-scyophant, he was, in my opinion, far superior to all his successors. Cooke might speak the Scottish language better, but he did not fill the stage so well, and had not such a biting humour. Mr. Young has lately performed Sir Pertinax with merited success.

I saw Macklin perform Iago, and Sir Paul Pliant, and other characters. In Iago, though doubtless he was correct in his conception of the character, he was coarse and clumsy in his deportment, and nothing could be more rough than his manner of stabbing Emilia, and running from the stage in the last scene. His Sir Paul was not wanting in noisy humour, but was rude in action. He was too theoretical for nature. He had three pauses in his acting—the first, moderate ; the second, twice as long ; but his last, or “grand pause,” as he styled it, was so long, that the prompter, on one occasion, thinking his memory failed, repeated the cue, as it is technically called, several times, and at last so loud as to be heard by the audience. At length Macklin rushed from the stage and knocked him down, exclaiming, “The fellow interrupted me in my grand pause.”

Macklin had a son, who I believe held a place in a government office, and according to report, died in India. His features were



even more plain than those of his father. I never heard that he was at all distinguished for talents. He was once pointed out to me as the son of Macklin, and I saw him again. He was a person of whom nothing was heard either good or bad.

There are two Lives of Macklin, one in a single volume written by his and my old friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, the author of "The Life of Foote," and many temporary pamphlets, besides a very good poem entitled "Conversation." Here I may relate a circumstance which manifests an extraordinary revolution in the life of a conspicuous character. A lieutenant in the royal navy had written a political pamphlet, but being called to his duty, was not able to see it through the press. He therefore placed it in the hands of a bookseller, desiring that he would give it to some literary man, who, for duly preparing it for publication, should have half the profits. The bookseller gave it Mr. Cooke, who soon discharged his duty. The work was published, and the profits were thirty pounds, all of which was given to Mr. Cooke, who took his portion, and reserved the other half for the author whenever he should call for it. Many years elapsed and he heard nothing of him. At length a gentleman called on him, told his name, and declared himself to be the author of the pamphlet, telling him he knew that fifteen pounds were due to him on account of the pamphlet, and adding, he was ashamed to take it, but that "his poverty and not his will" consented, as he had a wife and an increasing family. Mr. Cooke had the money ready for him, which the stranger took, and expressed his gratitude at parting. This necessitous author was the late Lord Erskine.

This fact may be depended on, upon the unquestionable authority of Mr. Cooke.

The other "Life of Macklin," in two volumes, was written by a literary gentleman who was reputed to be a son of Macklin. Mr. Cooke's, however, was likely to be the most authentic account, as he had known Macklin from an early period, and gave in it a general history of the stage during Macklin's time.

It has been generally understood that Dr. Johnson alluded to Macklin when he spoke of a person whose conversation was "a perpetual renovation of hope, with a constant disappointment." As far as I had an opportunity of judging, the description was just. Macklin was fond of talking, and generally had all the talk to himself, for the company were unwilling to interrupt a man at his very advanced age, expecting that something of historical, political, or theatrical matter would be learned from him. He mentioned Booth, Wilks, and Cibber; and when on the eve of telling a story of one, he rambled from one to the other, and nothing connected could be obtained. He mentioned Mrs. Oldfield with so much warmth and admiration, that we expected to hear something of her private history, or of her acting; yet all we learned was, that she had lived with Mr. Arthur Mainwaring, which all the world knew.

Booth's widow, he said, who upwards of forty years after the death

of her husband, placed a monument to his memory in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey (and whose maiden name was Santlow), was an admirable dancer, and had a very fine head of hair, which, in the middle of a dance, she always contrived to throw over her neck and shoulders in a very interesting and picturesque manner.

The hours, however, did not pass without amusement, for it was gratifying to see a man so much advanced in life, with high spirits and strong lungs, particularly as we were buoyed up all the time by the expectation of hearing something entertaining, nor were we altogether disappointed. There was a print from Opie's portrait, which accompanied Macklin's works as published by subscription by his friend Arthur Murphy.

The last time I ever saw Macklin was in Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, during a very severe frost, when the snow had hardened on the ground. He was well muffled up in a great coat, and walked to and fro with great vigour. I addressed him, and said, "Well, Mr. Macklin, I suppose you are comparing the merits of former actors with those of the present day." "The what of the present day?" said he, in a very loud tone; "the what, sir?" in a louder tone, "the actors, sir?" He repeated his question with a voice that made the whole street ring. "Perhaps, sir," said I, "you will not allow the present race to be actors." "Good morning, sir," said he, and abruptly parted from me, resuming his walk with extraordinary strength and speed.

His first wife, who was long before my time, I have always heard was an excellent actress. Plain as Macklin was when I knew him, my mother assured me that she remembered him to be a smart-looking dark man, and a very sprightly actor, even in juvenile parts, but hard in his manner, and apt to resort to his pauses, which he afterward graduated as I have before mentioned.

I have perhaps dwelt too long upon Macklin, but as he was a popular actor, a good dramatic writer, and a distinguished person in his day, he ought not to be hastily dismissed, since very few in his profession have come before the public with equal pretensions to their favour.

---

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

WITH MR. THOMAS SHERIDAN, the father of Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was so justly celebrated for his dramatic genius, political knowledge, and oratorical powers, I was slightly acquainted; sufficient, however, to convince me that he was a grave, sensible, and intelligent man, polite, but reserved in his manners. I saw him perform Hamlet and Brutus at the Haymarket theatre, and as far as I recollect of his acting, Churchill has given a just description of



him in his "Rosciad." His son, Brinsley, is said to have accounted for his not having seen Garrick so often as he wished, after he had once seen him, in consequence of having heard from his father that he himself was the best actor of the time; and as he considered his father rather a declaimer than an actor, relying then upon his father's judgment and veracity, he felt no curiosity to see Garrick. However, when he had seen him, he attributed his father's opinion of himself to that natural partiality with which we all estimate our own merits.

After the elder Mr. Sheridan had long relinquished acting, he joined with Mr. Henderson in public readings, for which they were well qualified by their respective talents. Mr. Sheridan took the graver, and Mr. Henderson the lighter and facetious department of these amusements, which were very attractive. It was in this species of entertainment that Mr. Henderson brought into notice the humorous tale of John Gilpin, which he recited with so much spirit and comic effect that it drew public attention to the poems of Cowper in general, which excellent as they are, particularly "The Task," were but little known at the time, though they are now justly in universal estimation.

Mr. Sheridan, in his portion of the readings, introduced too much of his dissertation on elocution, which was by no means suited to the taste of a mixed audience, and was indeed heavy in effect. His recital of the works of others was very impressive, but his voice was, as Churchill describes it, "irregular, deep, and shrill by fits." He gave Shensstone's "Elegy on Jesse," in a very pathetic manner, but his chief excellence was in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," which he recited by heart, and in the most animated manner. Indeed I cannot think it possible for anybody to recite that poem in a more impressive manner or with stronger effect. The great charm, however, of these readings, was Mr. Henderson's John Gilpin, which rendered the tale popular in all quarters.

Here I cannot but regret that I had not the genius of Cowper, for my tale of "Monsieur Tonson," which was admirably recited by Mr. Fawcett, was not less popular in its day, and drew crowded audiences to Freemasons' Tavern. Several of the actors, among whom were Mr. John Palmer, Mr. Burton, and many provincial performers, called on me requesting that I would read it to them, that they might better understand the conceptions of the author. They should rather have applied to Mr. Fawcett, whose example would have been a more instructive lesson.\*

The story has since been dramatized and expanded by Mr. Mon-

\* As I was one morning knocking at the door of a friend, a decent-looking person, but with rough manner, addressed me, abruptly saying, "Are you the author of Monsieur Tonson?" I simply answered, "I own my guilt." "I thought so," said he, and went away with equal abruptness; and if this may be considered a species of fame, I have seen myself pointed at in coffee-houses on the same account.

rief, a gentleman whom I have not the pleasure of knowing, but who has done me the honour to dedicate his humorous farce to me.

I must again refer to the readings, because they are connected with a ludicrous anecdote. Mr. Henderson's facetious readings rendered the entertainment so popular and attractive that it must have been very profitable to the performers; but notwithstanding the emoluments, Mr. Sheridan expressed some discontent, "For," said he, "I wanted the readings to be rather instructive than diverting, and calculated to attract the select and judicious; but Mr. Henderson has frustrated my intention by *bringing in the whole town*." Those who knew the grave character of the elder Mr. Sheridan, and his fondness for his favourite subject, elocution, will not be surprised at his whimsical disappointment.

With MR. THOMAS KING, generally called TOM KING from his easy manners and facetious talents, I was well acquainted. Churchill says of him,

'Mongst Drury's sons he comes and shines in brass.

It has been supposed by some that the critical poet alluded to his performance of Brass in the comedy of "The Confederacy," but this is a mistake. He was indeed admirable in that character, but the poet alluded to his general excellence in characters of a bold and spirited nature, such as the bucks and bloods of that time, as well as to the daring and intrusive characters of the old comedies.

King possessed a shrewd mind, and copied his characters from real life, and from the manners of any of his predecessors. He was admirable in story-telling in private company, and when any persons beat about the bush to draw from him a particular story, he always stopped them and said, "I see what you are at, don't give yourself any trouble," and he would then begin to tell a facetious anecdote, which required some degree of acting, as if it was some narrative of the day. My friend Donaldson, of whom I have given some account, was his schoolfellow at Westminster.

To show the revolutions of a theatrical life, Tom King, who afterward became one of the chief comic actors of his time, told his friend Donaldson that, soon after he adopted the profession, he walked all the way from Beaconsfield to Southwark to procure money from a friend to buy a pair of stockings, and when he walked back to perform the next day, his share of the profits was eighteen-pence, and his proportion, on a division, of the ends of candles.

Poor King unfortunately had an incurable propensity to gaming. After frequent and heavy losses he won one evening about 7000*l*. He immediately left the gaming-table and ran home. His wife was in bed. He fell upon his knees by the side of the bed and called vehemently for a Bible. Unhappily there was no such unprofessional book in the house, but King remained on his knees and solemnly swore that he would never visit a gaming-table again. His propen-



sity, however, returned upon him, and he ventured his all one night, which was won by a colonel in the British army, a very rich man, not without a strong suspicion that he was guilty of false play; and the suspicion was so near proof, that he went to all the clubs of which he was a member and erased his name from the books, conscious that, when an explanation took place, he would have been dismissed with infamy from them all. This man, who was of a good family, after his conduct towards King, was discarded from society, and used to wander alone through the streets, an object of contempt to all who had before known and respected him.

King once kept his carriage, had a house in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, and a villa at Hampton, near the mansion of his friend Garrick, who held him in high regard; but his fatal turn for gaming deprived him of these advantages, and rendered him a poor man for the remainder of his life. He had for several years been attached to Miss Baker, a celebrated dancer at Drury-lane theatre, and happening to break his leg, and being attended by her with great kindness during his illness, he married her on his recovery, and they lived many years as happily together after such a change of fortune, the result of his own imprudence, as could well be expected.

It is lamentable to state that this affectionate wife, who had shared prosperity with him, when, besides the advantages which I have mentioned, he enjoyed a large weekly salary, and a very productive annual benefit, was after his death obliged to live in a garret in Tottenham-court road, supported chiefly by those who knew her in better days. She bore the reverse of her fortune with patience and submission; and even with her scanty means, by her taste rendered her apartment an agreeable scene of simple decoration.

King possessed literary talents and a turn for poetry. I called on him one morning when he lodged in a respectable house in Store-street, Bedford-square, and as he had not left the stage and his benefit was approaching, I advised him to throw into rhyme a story which I had heard him tell in prose, as it would be something novel on the occasion. He complied with my advice, and soon after read to me his versification, in which he had retained all the humorous points of the story, and the whole was written with great spirit. He recited it on the stage with good effect.

There are many persons who hold poetry in contempt, and some even in horror; but if King had devoted himself as much to the Muse as he did to the gaming-table, he might have added lustre to his character, have profited by his literary effusions, have ended his life in affluence, and his faithful and affectionate wife would have inherited the comfort of an elegant independence, in some degree to console her for the loss of her husband.

I had some opportunities of rendering him literary service, which always afforded me pleasure; and which he acknowledged with much more gratitude than that service could possibly have deserved. His

Tom in "The Conscious Lovers," was excellent, so was his Trappanti and Lissardo. Lissardo was the last character I saw him perform. While he stood, he acted with his former spirit and humour; but when he fell upon his knees, and Don Felix held the sword at his breast, he was unable to get up, and the master was obliged to help the servant to regain his feet.

These characters, and others of a similar description, were exactly suited to his talents; but in the real fine gentleman there was a kind of briskness in his manner and a sort of subtle look in his features, by no means consistent with high-bred deportment. In this respect he was greatly eclipsed by his powerful competitor Woodward, who could play the high-bred gentleman or fop, and was equally excellent in all the other characters in which King was chiefly successful. Poor King! I wrote an occasional address on his death, which I had the pleasure to hear was very gratifying to his widow.

I first saw Woodward in the part of the Copper Captain, and it is not possible for me to describe the nature, truth, and perseverance with which he gave the laugh introduced into the character; but I recollect well that it spread the contagion of laughter over the whole audience. I afterward saw King several times in the same character, and it is but justice to his memory to say, that his laugh, though quite different from that of Woodward, was not less natural, and hardly less effective. Yet after all there is no adequate reason for such a laugh; for though the captain might be glad that Estifania had disposed of his baubles, a smile would have been sufficient, particularly as it only served to convince him that his wife was a cheat, as well as otherwise a frail woman. It reminds me of what Churchill says of love in Falstaff:—

When Falstaff stands detected in a lie,  
Why without reason rolls love's glassy eye?  
Why, there's no cause, at least no cause we know,—  
It was the fashion twenty years ago.

With equal justice the laugh may be condemned, but it is so rooted to the stage by tradition, that no actor must now assume the part of the Copper Captain who is not provided with a good contagious laugh, however ably he may otherwise support the whole of the character.

MR. WILLIAM LEWIS. I saw this gentleman the first night of his appearance on the London stage, and his performance of Belcour, in "The West Indian," was so spirited and characteristic, that he was soon distinguished by the title of Belcour Lewis. His figure was light and his manner easy. He was a fit successor to Woodward, whose characters he in general inherited. He also appeared with success in tragic parts, and I read a criticism on his acting in Hannah More's tragedy of "Percy," actually written by Mr. Garrick by desire of his friend Bate Dudley, afterward Sir Henry. This criticism was highly favourable.



Mr. Lewis, with whom I had long the pleasure of being acquainted, in a conversation which I once had with him, declared that he prided himself on having clearly distinguished his mode of acting parts in the old comedies, such as Archer, Ranger, &c., and the wild characters in modern plays, such as those introduced by O'Keeffe, and followed in the comedies of Reynolds and Morton,—characters that show a lively invention in all of those authors, but are very different from those of Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh, whose characters, though highly coloured, were yet drawn from life. Still, however, from observation of Mr. Lewis's acting, I cannot but think that, whatever his merit might be in what may be styled the legitimate characters of the elder dramatists, he was chiefly successful in the wild sketches of the writers of a later date. His Mercutio was excellent, and I have heard it warmly praised by the late Mr. John Kemble, who was always liberal where praise was justly due, but not otherwise.

Mr. Lewis, like King, abounded in anecdotes, which he related without hesitation, and with great humour, particularly such as involved Irish humour and manners. My late friend Mr. Cooke, an Irishman, told me that nothing could be more exact than Mr. Lewis's representation of the bucks and bloods of Dublin, who were of a gayer yet more determined order than those who formerly distinguished themselves in London, but were nearly extinct when I first began to regard the passing world, and the magistracy was more regularly settled. We now, indeed, never hear of such riotous adventurers and enemies of watchmen, as those who existed about the middle, or perhaps earlier part, of the reign of George the Third.

Mr. Lewis, though so active and spirited in the representation of the eccentric parts of modern comedy, was polite in his manners, and peaceable in his disposition, but ready to support his character with the most determined courage, if occasion required, of which instances occurred which it is not necessary to mention. He was social, but not too convivial, or inclined to dissipation, as, indeed, was fully evinced by the large fortune which he bequeathed to his family. He was a kind husband and father, and possessed a very intelligent and amiable wife, whose memory, as well as that of her husband, I hold in sincere regard. He was not so zealous an admirer of Garrick as I expected from his general taste and judgment; but the Irish in general were partial to their countrymen, Barry and Mossop.

Mr. Lewis, indeed, was a native of Wales, but was taken so early to Dublin by his mother, who had married a second husband, that he naturally imbibed all the native peculiarities of the Irish taste. He made it a point, however, to become acquainted with the great British "Roscius," and told me that he found Mr. Garrick kind, attentive, and confidential.

Mr. Lewis observed that he had seen the mechanical parts of acting, such as pushing the chair in Don Felix, in order to be reconciled

to *Violante*, Archer combing the wig, and actions of a similar description in other comic plays, executed with more address than by Garrick; but he candidly acknowledged that he ascribed the invention and introduction of them wholly to him, and added that Garrick's tragedy was irresistible, though he did not think altogether superior to what he had witnessed in Barry and Mossop.

I have often dined in company with Mr. Lewis, at the hospitable table of the late Mr. Harris, the proprietor of Covent Garden theatre; and his gay and spirited anecdotes rendered him an admirable companion. He was, therefore, essentially different in private life from his great predecessor Woodward, who, though so brisk and animated on the stage, was always silent and reserved, if not saturnine, in company. One of Mr. Lewis's sons reached the rank of colonel in the service of the Honourable East India Company; another went upon the stage; and the youngest is at present the respectable proprietor and manager of the Liverpool theatre. Mr. Lewis had also three amiable daughters, one of whom he had the misfortune to lose during his life. His widow survived him some years, and died sincerely regretted by all who were acquainted with her. The two remaining daughters live under the affectionate protection of their brother at Liverpool.

There are several portraits of Mr. Lewis, but the best is a whole-length, the size of life, in the character of the Marquis, in the farce of "*The Midnight Hour*," painted by Mr. Shee, the royal academican, now Sir Arthur Shee, and president of the academy, which is not only an admirable characteristic likeness, but a work of great professional excellence.

One of the last original characters which Lewis performed was Jeremy Diddler, in the humorous farce of "*Raising the Wind*." The farce was brought forward on a Saturday night, and on that very night died the person who was justly considered the hero of the piece: this was no other than Bibb, a well-known character at that time, who accompanied Shuter in his expedition to Paris to win a wager. Though the person in question was not a theatrical performer, yet he was so much connected with theatrical performers, and acted so singular a part in the drama of life, that I may not improperly introduce him on the present occasion. He was the son of a respectable sword-cutler in Great Newport-street. The father was a grave and prudent man, who gave his son a good education, and afterward articted him to an engraver. Bibb practised the art some years, and I remember a print which he engraved, representing the interior of the Pantheon, in Oxford-street.

Bibb's print was not a work of high professional skill, but, from the number of the figures, and the large size of the plate, displayed more industry than could have been expected from a character that was afterward marked by idleness and dissipation. I knew him very early in life, and occasionally saw him until near his death. He was much inclined to gaming, and took me once to a hazard-table in



Gerrard-street, Soho, where I saw Dr. Luzato, an Italian physician, who visited my father, and was a very agreeable and intelligent man. Baddeley, the actor, was also there. A dispute arose between Baddeley and the doctor, which was likely to terminate seriously, but the rest of the assembly interposed, lest the *character of the house* should be called in question, and their nocturnal orgies suppressed. The house went under the name of the Royal Larder, which was merely a cover to conceal its real purpose, that of a place for the meeting of gamblers.

I was very young at the time, and being ignorant of the game, I had not courage to engage at the hazard-table. It was a meeting of a very inferior kind, for a shilling was admitted as a stake. I had a very few shillings in my pocket, which Bibb borrowed of me as the box came round to him, and lost every time. The house was kept by a man named Nelson, who afterward was landlord of the George Inn, opposite to Wyche-street, in Drury-lane. I shall have occasion to mention this man again.

How Bibb supported himself, having relinquished engraving, it would be difficult to conceive, if he had not levied taxes upon all whom he knew, inasmuch that besides his title of Count, he acquired that of "Half-crown Bibb," by which appellation he was generally distinguished; and according to a rough, and, perhaps, fanciful estimate, he had borrowed at least 2000*l.* in half-crowns.

I remember to have met him on the day when the death of Dr. Johnson was announced in the newspapers; and expressing my regret at the loss of so great a man, Bibb interrupted me, and spoke of him as a man of no genius, whose mind contained nothing but the lumber of learning. I was modestly beginning a panegyric upon the doctor, when he again interrupted me with, "Oh! never mind that old blockhead. Have you such a thing as ninepence about you?" Luckily for him I had a little more.

There was something so whimsical in this incident, that I mentioned it to some friends, and that and others of the same kind doubtless induced Mr. Kenny to make him the hero of his diverting farce, called "Raising the Wind," already mentioned. Another circumstance of a similar nature was told me by Mr. Morton, whose dramatic works are deservedly popular. He told me that Bibb met him one day after the successful performance of one of his plays, and, concluding that a prosperous author must have plenty of cash, commenced his solicitation accordingly, and ventured to ask him for the loan of a whole crown. Morton assured him that he had no more silver than three shillings and sixpence. Bibb readily accepted them, of course, but said on parting, "Remember I intended to borrow a crown, so you owe me eighteen-pence." This stroke of humour induced Morton to regret that Bibb had left him his debtor.

Bibb, in his latter days, devised a good scheme to raise the supplies. He hired a large room for the reception of company once a week, which he paid for only for the day. He then, with the con-

sent of his friends, provided a handsome dinner, for which the guests paid their due proportion. There can be little doubt that many extraordinary characters assembled on these occasions. He told me his plan, and requested I would be one of the party. I promised I would attend, and regret that I was prevented, as so motley an assemblage must have afforded abundant amusement.

Bibb's father, knowing the disposition of his son, left him an annuity, which was to be paid at the rate of two guineas a week, and which never was to be advanced beyond that sum. This was, however, probably dissipated the next day, and, when expended, he used to apply to his sister, a very amiable young lady, who was married to a respectable merchant. Having been tired by frequent applications, the husband would not let him enter the door. Bibb then seated himself on the steps, and passengers seeing a man decently dressed in that situation, naturally stopped, and at length a crowd was collected. The gentleman, then desirous of getting rid of a crowd, and probably in compliance with the desire of his wife, found it necessary to submit to her brother's requisition.

When I first became acquainted with Bibb, he had the manners of a gentleman with easy gayety, having recently returned from travelling, as companion to a person of fortune. His conversation was enlivened with humour, and, perhaps, I might add with wit; but as he gradually departed from genteel society, and associated chiefly with gamblers, if not sharpers, his manners proportionably degenerated, and once sitting nearly opposite to him at a public dinner, having received a ticket from one of my friends, I was surprised to observe that all Bibb said was accompanied by nods, winks, and by thrusting his tongue into his cheek. I could hardly believe that I had remembered him with a pleasing vivacity and well-bred manners.

Nothing could subdue the spirit of his character, for he would make a joke of those necessities under which others would repine, droop, and despair. His death was fortunate at the period when it happened, for it not only relieved him in old age from probable infirmities, which, if they had confined him at home, would doubtless have deprived him of all resources of an eleemosynary nature, but would have reduced him to absolute starvation. It was also, as I have before observed, fortunate, for he escaped the mortification of seeing his character brought upon the stage. The public journals of the Monday after his death were full of anecdotes of his extraordinary life. I may fairly add, that if he had been a man of fortune, with his talents, promptitude, and humour, he might have made a very respectable figure in life, and have been a useful member of society.

There are doubtless many in this metropolis who lead a life of expediency, like Bibb, but few who can support their difficulties with such fortune and cheerfulness as he did, or who, like him, can sport with fortune, and submit to live by degrading supplications, while cautiously avoiding to incur the severities of law.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MR. THOMAS DAVIES. This gentleman was many years on the stage, but left it partly because he never was able to obtain much theatrical reputation, though chiefly because he was a victim to the severity of Churchill in his "Rosciad."

I once had an opportunity of seeing Davies act, long after he had left the stage, when a benefit was given to him at Drury-lane theatre; but whether during the management of Garrick, I do not recollect, though I believe it was granted by him. The play was "The Way of the World," and Davies was announced in the part of Fainall. There was a dull gravity in his acting, and his voice had a rumbling tone. It was, therefore, evident, that Churchill was hardly too severe in his criticism; but, as Davies was a scholar, a man of taste, and bore an honest character, the churlish poet ought to have passed over him entirely, or have been less severe. What part Davies had taken in politics, or what "*plots*" he had been concerned in, it is now impossible to know; but as Davies was a stanch whig, his political principles could not have been different from those of the satirist. Long after the death of Churchill, Davies published his Life of Garrick, and at a later period gave three volumes of Dramatic Miscellanies to the world. In the latter work he, as often as occasion admitted, certainly manifested his political principles, but by no means inconsistent with rational loyalty.

His Life of Garrick is very creditable to his critical knowledge, and he generally appreciates the powers of the great actor with candour and judgment; though at times, he certainly, by preferring others to him in some parts, seems to pay court to theatrical merits extant at the time when his work was published. The same courtesy appears also in his Dramatic Miscellanies, but in general the work evinces the taste of a critic, and the learning of a scholar. It is evident that he must have been a very diffusive reader, and he successfully applies what he has read to the subject before him. He sometimes, however, speaks as confidently of the merits of actors who existed before his time as if he had actually witnessed their performances, though it is evident that he could only judge from written records, or personal information. The anecdotes which he introduces are amusing and appropriate, but sometimes his interpretation of difficult passages is too conjectural, and his emendatory criticism by no means satisfactory. Yet he differs modestly from the opinions of higher authorities, and is never confident in maintaining his own. He speaks with respect of Mr. G. Steevens as a commentator, but seems to have had a very indifferent opinion of his moral character.

The following extract from Mr. Davies's third volume presents Mr. Steevens in so unfavourable a point of view, that as that gentleman will always retain a high reputation for his literary merits, I may properly introduce it as one among many rumours of the same description that were in circulation during his life, and were by those who knew him generally credited.

"Mr. Steevens," says Davies, "in addition to his large note (on a particular passage in Hamlet), assures us that there was more illiberal private abuse, and peevish satire, published in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James the First, than in any other age except the present. This is not very clear to me; but happy is the man who can, with a good conscience, affirm he never was guilty of the base practice of wounding the fair reputation of others, or of disturbing the peace of families by malicious and rancorous slander. The propagation of obloquy, to gain wealth and preferment, may admit of some exculpation; but of all abuse, that which is spontaneous and unprovoked is the most unaccountable. What does Mr. Steevens think of a gentleman who, when at his country-seat, found no amusement so pleasing as writing libels upon his neighbours, and throwing them over the garden walls, with the malignant design to torment those who had never offended him?"

The charge implied in this question I had often heard urged against Mr. Steevens long before I read this passage in Mr. Davies's work; and in corroboration of it, I shall insert what I heard from my late friend Arthur Murphy, whose dramatic works will always keep possession of the stage. Mr. Murphy said that he had been some time out of town after the successful exhibition of one of his plays, but I do not recollect which. On his return to town Mr. Steevens called on him, and in the course of conversation asked if he had seen a severe attack on his play, in the *St. James's Chronicle*. Murphy said he had not. In a day or two after Mr. Steevens called on him again, and, referring to the same article, asked him if he had not seen it. Mr. Murphy asked him how long ago the article had appeared; Steevens told him about a fortnight. "Why, then," said Murphy, "would you have me search for it in the jakes, where only it now can probably be found?" There was something of apparent disappointment in the manner of Steevens, and it struck Mr. Murphy that he was probably the author. He, therefore, excused himself for putting an end to the interview then, pretending that he had some papers to examine; and as soon as Steevens had departed, Mr. Murphy set off post to the office of "*The St. James's Chronicle*," and requested to see the manuscript of the article in question. The late Mr. Baldwin obligingly complied, and Mr. Murphy found that it was in the handwriting of Steevens. Steevens denied that it was his handwriting, and by mutual consent the matter was referred to the decision of Dr. Johnson. Mr. Murphy submitted his proofs to the doctor, and Mr. Steevens attempted a defence, but the doctor deemed



it so unsatisfactory, that all he said on the occasion was, that Mr. Steevens must hereafter "lead the life of an outlaw."

The late Mr. Kemble told me, upon the authority of Mr. Malone, that when Mr. Steevens called, during the doctor's last illness, to inquire how he was, the black servant went and told the doctor that Mr. Steevens waited below. "Where is he?" said the doctor. "On the outside of the street-door," was the answer. "The best place for him," was the reply.

Mr. Steevens was accused of having treated his friend Mr. George Keate, a gentleman whose literary works are honourable to his talents, in the same manner with respect to one of those works, as he had acted towards Mr. Murphy's play.

Mr. Steevens was very intimate with Mr. Isaac Reed, a gentleman whose memory must be held in respect for his moral character, as well as for his literary attainments. Mr. Reed saw Mr. Steevens's last edition of "Shakspeare" through the press, and Mr. Steevens was accustomed to call at six in the morning for the proofs, which Mr. Reed laid at the door of his chambers in Staple Inn every night, that he might not be disturbed at so early an hour. Mr. Reed's veneration for Shakspeare, and desire to oblige his friend, induced him to be assiduous and punctual.

The following anecdote is told as a proof of the gratitude of Steevens. It is said that he employed a woman of the town, of some education and talents, to place herself at the door of Mr. Reed's chambers, and tell a pitiable tale of her distress and of the misfortunes which she had suffered. When Mr. Reed came home, she acted her part so well that he was strongly interested, and, as she said she was without a home, he offered her money to procure a bed where she could find one. In pursuance of the instructions which she had received, she said she was ignorant of that part of the town, and too weak to go to any other. Mr. Reed had but one bed, but rather than expose the poor woman to the necessity of wandering through the streets at a late hour, he actually resigned his bed to her, and slept at a neighbouring coffee-house.

This despicable trick of Mr. Steevens, by which he intended to try the virtue of Mr. Reed, and perhaps afterward to disgrace him by promulgating the incident, which he doubtless hoped would have had a different termination, only proved the humanity of Mr. Reed, and the malignant character of his pretended friend.

To return to Mr. Davies. I became acquainted with him soon after the death of Dr. Johnson; and having seen what I had written in a public journal in honour of the memory of the doctor, he treated me with more attention than I could reasonably have expected, considering the difference of our ages, for he was then very much advanced in life. There is one passage in the second volume of his *Miscellanies*, which I wish he had omitted, as it is illiberal in itself, and inconsistent with his general estimation of the character of Mr. Garrick.

It seems that Mr. Colman had suggested to Mr. Garrick the propriety of reviving some of those dramatic works, in which Burbage, Taylor, and Betterton had distinguished themselves. "And here," said Mr. Davies, "I doubt somebody might hint, it were to be wished that Mr. Colman had not employed the names of those celebrated old comedians as a powerful charm to prevail on Garrick to grant his request, who never wished to hear the name of any actor but one." Mr. Davies has here unwarily inserted a compliment to Mr. Garrick, rather than a sarcasm on him; for it implies that Mr. Garrick had not much confidence in the superiority of his powers, since he feared to be brought in comparison with those who had lived upwards of a hundred years before him, and two of them nearly twice that number.

In another part of his work, he observes that Garrick had no portraits but of himself in his house. They were, perhaps, presents from the several artists. Garrick never professed to be a collector of pictures, or a connoisseur in painting, though he had many valuable works of art, most of which were probably presented to him as tributes to his extraordinary talents. Mr. Davies, in his account of Congreve, has fallen into a mistake, where he says that Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough was so attached to him, that, after his death, she had a statue of him which was placed on her table at dinner, and that she addressed it as if alive. According to the information of Dr. Monsey, who was family physician to the Earl of Godolphin, the lady in question was the daughter of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who was married to the Earl of Godolphin.

Mr. Davies afforded a proof of the difficulty of combining two professions with success. His literary talents and learning would probably have raised him into independence as an author, or have procured the patronage of some distinguished person; or if he had contented himself with being merely a bookseller and publisher of the works of others, he might have acquired a large fortune, like many others in that business; but, carrying on both employments, he became embarrassed, and I believe died in a state of insolvency. His "very pretty wife," as Churchill calls her, I saw when I called on her husband. She was plain but neat in her attire, and in face and person exhibited the remains of beauty that justified the poet's panegyric. She had a meek, dejected look, probably resulting from the situation of her husband, and the recollections of better days. She had been an actress of respectable, but not distinguished talents, and maintained an unimpeachable character through life. I regret to add, that after all her moral and professional merits, I have heard she ended her days in a workhouse some years after the death of her husband.

It is impossible for me to state this melancholy fact without deeply lamenting the vicissitudes of fortune. Here we behold an amiable and accomplished woman, who would have been an example and an ornament to her sex in any condition of life, fall a victim to adversity, not arising from any want of prudence, and sink unknown into the grave; on the other hand we see a female profligate enjoy all the



luxuries of life, and at her death honoured with a splendid funeral, and a pompous monument, bearing an inscription celebrating qualities moral and intellectual, wholly without foundation. Both of these events have happened within my knowledge, and probably within that of innumerable others.

MR. JOHN PALMER. I was very well acquainted with this actor, who in his proper sphere was one of the best I ever knew. He possessed a fine person, and an expressive face. His voice was powerful and of a good tone. Though comedy was his forte, he could perform the tyrannical parts of tragedy with great effect. He was calculated for all those parts in which King excelled, such as bucks, bloods, impudent footmen, &c. He particularly excelled in the delivery of sarcasm and irony, as was evident in his Sneer in the farce of "The Critic." I have seen him perform both Brass and Dick in "The Confederacy," and he was equally excellent in both. When he performed a serious character, but not of the high tragic kind, such as Villeroy in the tragedy of "Isabella," he was elegant and impressive. His Stukely in "The Gamester" was excellent. Indeed I once heard Mrs. Siddons, and who could estimate theatrical merit with more judgment? once say, "When shall we see such a Villeroy and Stukely again?" He was not an educated man, but possessed a natural discernment, and seemed to be led by instinct to the characters most fit for his talents; but when he assumed the higher parts of tragedy, which required intellectual powers of no ordinary description, he was not successful; and for the same reason his Falstaff did not add to his reputation. In convivial characters he was justly admired, particularly Sir Toby in "Twelfth Night." As a general actor I have never seen his superior.

Though capable of giving full effect to comic parts, he took no part in conversation; yet he was very attentive to what passed, and proved by his manner that he not only understood fully the wit and humour of others, but enjoyed them. I have seen him in company with the present Mr. Colman, and could not but observe the ingenuity with which he varied his dumb-show admiration of the facetious sallies of that gentleman's inexhaustible vivacity. He was a well-bred man, but carried his courtesy to such an excess as to excite a suspicion of its sincerity. When he opened the Royalty theatre, the patentees of Covent Garden naturally appealed to the magistracy to suppress it. My old and esteemed friend Mr. Const was the counsel engaged by the patentees; and the performers at the Royalty theatre were all taken into custody, but were released at the intercession of Mr. Palmer, upon a promise that they would appear at an appointed place next morning at twelve o'clock. The magistrates and Mr. Const were punctual. Mr. Palmer attended soon after, but without the rest of the performers. Mr. Const expressed his surprise that, after his solemn promise of bringing the other performers, they had not attended. Mr. Palmer's answer was, "I know your heart," meaning of course that Mr. Const was too humane to adopt any harsh measures towards them. Mr. Const renewed his requisition for their appearance, but

received the same compliment on his benevolence. At length, finding Mr. Const was firmly determined that they should appear, Mr. Palmer left the room, apparently to fetch them. The magistrates, however, remained an hour or more, and then thinking it was in vain to expect Mr. Palmer or the performers, they broke up the meeting, but found, on attempting to quit the room, that he had locked the door upon them. And here I may mention an extraordinary change in the condition of an individual.

When Mr. Colman the elder closed the door of Covent Garden theatre upon his partners, Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, a journeyman carpenter, named Hyde, was employed by those gentlemen to force a passage into the house; and in the attempt to stop the Royalty theatre, the same man, then Justice Hyde, was the most active magistrate engaged on the occasion, and on a business the reverse of his former employment. I was present with Mr. Arthur Murphy in the lower gallery of the Royalty theatre on its first opening. We could not obtain any other place. Mr. Palmer spoke an occasional address, which, from the attention which Mr. Murphy paid to it, I told him I suspected to be his composition. He confessed it was, but bade me be cautious, for he was then on friendly terms with the patentees, and knew of course that he was supporting an illegal measure.

The Rev. William Jackson was to have been a partner of the Royalty theatre, if it could have obtained a legal toleration for performances. Jackson was a powerful writer, and supported the claims of Mr. Palmer, but the theatre never obtained a legal sanction in his time. When Palmer, after this attempt to establish a new theatre, found his way back to Drury-lane theatre, he appeared to be all contrition, humility, and self-reproach before Mr. Sheridan, just as he acted the part of Joseph Surface in "The School for Scandal;" but in the midst of his professions of repentance, Mr. Sheridan stopped him with the utmost good-humour, and only said, "Palmer, you forget that I wrote the character." Indeed Palmer's general habit was so much in the manner of Joseph Surface, that it might have tempted the author to design the character for him.

---

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

MR. JOHN KEMBLE. Having already said so much of this gentleman in a former part of the present work, I have little to add respecting him. His *Hamlet*, which made an unfavourable impression on me when I saw him perform it on the first night of his appearance in London, was so much improved by reflection and practice, that it really presented a model of theatrical excellence, and probably never will be exceeded in correct conception and dignified deportment. His *Coriolanus* was a masterpiece. He often paid me the compliment of



consulting me on any passage of Shakspeare that appeared doubtful, and would listen with great attention to any opinion that differed from his own; and I do not recollect any occasion on which I had not reason to assent to his explanation of the text. But I never knew any person who was more ready to attend to the suggestions of others. He often desired that I would let him know where I did not approve of his acting; and his manner was so open and sincere, that I did not scruple to give my opinion, even to such a master of his art, and so acute a critic. He never spared pains to ascertain the meaning of what he or anybody thought doubtful.

I remember once, in compliance with his request, I told him I thought that in one passage of "Hamlet," Garrick as well as himself, and all other actors, were wrong in delivering it. The passage was where Horatio tells Hamlet that he came to see his father's funeral, and Hamlet says it was rather to see his mother's marriage, when Horatio observes "it followed hard upon." Hamlet replies,

Thrift, thrift, Horatio, the funeral baked meats  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.

I observed that this passage was always given in anger, whereas in my opinion it ought to be delivered with ironical praise. He immediately took down a Polyglot Dictionary, and examined the derivation and accepted meaning of the word thrift in all the languages, and finding that it was always given in a commendatory sense, he thanked me, and always after gave the passage in the manner I had suggested.

I ventured to point out other alterations in "Hamlet" which it might appear vain in me to mention. Suffice it to say, that in hearing them he said, "Now, Taylor, I have copied the part of Hamlet forty times, and you have obliged me to consider and copy it once more." This is a proof of the labour and study which he devoted to his profession. It is but justice to the rest of his family, as well as to himself, to say they were all so perfect in their parts that the prompter never was appealed to in their acting.

Though Mr. Kemble was of a jocular temper, and laughed as heartily in company as any person I ever knew, he was certainly not born to be a votary of Thalia in characters of a very lively and facetious description. When he assumed the part of Charles in "The School for Scandal," I believe he did so to please Mr. Sheridan, who was always alive and anxious respecting his own dramatic compositions.

In the evening which I passed with him and Mr. Richardson at the Bedford Coffee-house, though he admitted Mr. Garrick to be probably the greatest actor that ever existed, yet, referring to the play of "Pizarro," of which he seemed to be as proud as he had reason to be of his original works, he observed that he thought Garrick could not have performed Rolla so well as Kemble. This opinion may be considered as a sort of parental bigotry, from which even the highest minds are not exempt.

Kemble at one period of his life was certainly rather inclined to

the bottle, and under its influence was induced to be a little frolicksome, as will appear from some anecdotes which I have before related.

On the first representation of "The Mountaineers" at the Haymarket theatre, I met him in the green-room at the end of the play, when he had performed the part of Octavian, and he asked me to take a glass with him at Mrs. Stephen Kemble's, who lodged in the Haymarket, and who was sister to my first wife. I objected, observing I was afraid he would keep me up too late. He said I need not be afraid, for that he lived at Turnham Green, to which he must go that night, and as the play succeeded, and was likely to have a long run, and he had a fatiguing part in it, he required rest too much to keep late hours. I consented, but was actually kept by him till seven in the morning. His carriage had been waiting at the door all the time, and he then offered to carry me home to Hatton Garden; I however declined the offer.

He was very desirous that I should introduce him to my friend William Gifford, whom he highly respected, not only for his learning and poetical talents, but as the shrewdest and most intelligent of all the editors of dramatic authors. I settled an evening with Mr. Gifford, and went with Mr. Kemble at the time appointed. They had all the talk to themselves, and seemed to be highly gratified with each other. Mr. Kemble offered him the free use of his library, if he thought it would assist him in his illustration of Ben Jonson, whose works Mr. Gifford was then preparing for publication. Mr. Gifford availed himself of this offer, and all the books he wanted were immediately sent to him, and were carefully returned.

Mr. Gifford afterward expressed much regret that a line unfavourable to Mr. Kemble had appeared in his poem of "The Baviad," but said that as a new edition of that poem was preparing for the press, he would take care to expunge the offensive passage. He did so, yet when I suggested to him that it would be proper to expunge another passage in the same poem, unfavourable to my friend Mr. Jerningham, he said that the copy-right not being his own, he could not presume to gut a work that belonged to another. Gifford kept up an amicable intercourse with Kemble so long as the latter lived, and spoke of his death with sincere regret.

MR. HULL the actor. With this actor I was very intimate, and held him in great respect. He was deservedly esteemed by the whole of the theatrical community. He was in the medical profession before he adopted that of an actor, but in what rank I never knew. He was generally styled Doctor by the performers. As he had a strong lisp, it is strange he should have ventured on the stage; but he probably depended on his good sense and knowledge. He was an actor of great judgment and feeling, and his merit in Friar Lawrence was universally acknowledged; and in this character his lisp was even an advantage. He was a man of learning, and possessed literary talents. He wrote a tragedy entitled "Fair Rosamond," published two volumes of poems by subscription, and I had the pleasure of being one of his subscribers. He also published "Letters" to a lady who had been



his pupil, and whom he afterward married. This lady appeared upon the stage in the character of Paulina in "The Winter's Tale." At the time I knew them, they were advanced into the "vale of years," and were a perfect Darby and Joan. She often came behind the scenes, to admire and animate her husband, long after she had left the stage. It was gratifying to observe the attention which they paid to each other at their advanced period of life. This attention was often a subject of mirth to the lively actors, but was always respected by those of a graver kind, because it was evidently the effect of long and rooted attachment.

I remember one night seeing them both behind the scenes, when they came merely from curiosity, as Hull did not act on that occasion. He was just going to take a pinch of snuff, when she said, "Try mine, my dear." "I will, my love," he replied, and in his manner displayed the endearment of a youthful lover. Yet there was nothing ludicrous in the gallantry of this aged pair. The actors of his own rank, in his time, were obviously so much below him in knowledge and understanding, that he rated himself somewhat high, but not proudly, in comparison with them.

I never saw Mrs. Hull act, nor know what characters she performed besides Paulina, but it was said that on one occasion, at the end of the performance, he came to her, and said, "My dear, you played like an angel to-night;" and then turning a little aside, said to himself, "and for that matter, so did I, too." On the publication of his poems, I wrote a few stanzas in praise of them, and sent the manuscript to his wife, and afterward introduced them into a newspaper. From respect to his memory, I have since inserted them in my volumes. Soon after the lady received my verses, she called on me to express her gratitude, and told me that she had copied them fifteen times, to present them to ladies who were friends of her husband.

Mr. Hull was for a few years the stage-manager of Covent Garden theatre, and in that capacity, as well as for his good sense, was always required to address the audience when any thing particular had occurred. A ludicrous circumstance happened during the time that mobs paraded the streets at night when Admiral Keppel had been acquitted of the charges brought against him by Sir Hugh Palliser. Mr. Hull lived in a corner of Martlett's Court, Bow-street, at the time. One of these mobs came before his door and called for beer. He ordered his servant to supply them, till a barrel which he happened to have in his house was exhausted; and soon after another mob came with the same demand, and did not depart without doing mischief. A third mob came, and clamorously demanded the same refreshment. Mr. Hull then addressed them, with theatrical formality, in the following terms: "Ladies and gentlemen, one of my barrels has been drunk out, and one has been let out; there are no more in the house, and therefore we hope for your usual indulgence on these occasions."

Mr. Hull deserves the perpetual gratitude of the theatrical community, as he was the original founder of that benevolent institution, "The Theatrical Fund," which secures a provision for the aged and infirm of either sex, who are no longer capable of appearing with propriety before the public. That he was really the founder admits of no dispute; and therefore, as I have attended many anniversary dinners in honour of the institution, I have been astonished that no tribute to his memory has been ever offered on the occasion.

Mr. Hull survived his wife some years. He appointed Mrs. Richards, the wife of Mr. Richards, an eminent scene-painter to Covent Garden theatre, as his executrix; and at her desire, as well as from respect to the memory of Mr. Hull, I wrote the following lines on his death.

#### EPITAPH

*On the late Thomas Hull, Esq., founder of the Theatrical Fund.*

Hull, long respected in the scenic art,  
On life's great stage sustain'd a virtuous part;  
And some memorial of his zeal to show  
For his lov'd art, and shelter age from wo,  
He form'd that noble Fund which guards his name,  
Embalm'd by gratitude—enshrin'd by fame.

This epitaph is inscribed on his tombstone in the Abbey churchyard, Westminster. He held in the greatest esteem his friend Shenstone, the poet, to whose memory he dedicated his tragedy.

Mr. Hull was the author of several Oratorios, founded on scriptural subjects, which were adapted to music, and performed at the theatres. Mrs. Richards kindly presented to me some observations on "Paradise Lost," which Mr. Hull received from Shenstone's niece: they are in the poet's handwriting, and were written in the twenty-first year of his age, probably while he was at Pembroke College, Oxford. What is somewhat odd, he concludes with the following words:

"Milton had no ear, that's poz."

This little tract is now in my possession: the handwriting resembles that of Pope. It is my opinion, and was the opinion of Dr. Wolcot, that if Shenstone had written nothing but "The Schoolmistress," he would have been entitled to a high rank among the British poets.

MR. WILLIAM SMITH. This gentleman, who was generally distinguished by the appellation of "Gentleman Smith," I had not the pleasure of knowing till many years after he had retired from the stage. I had been applied to by Mr. Hill, a gentleman well known in the literary circles of the metropolis, who was then the proprietor of a respectable literary and theatrical repository, entitled "The Monthly Mirror," now no longer in existence, to procure a biographical sketch of Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith I had been accustomed to see perform in my early days, and was a warm admirer of his acting. I had been present when he took leave of the stage, and was in a private box at Drury-lane theatre with Madame Mara.



On entering the stage, to deliver his farewell to the audience, he was received with a universal burst of applause, which was repeated, and continued for several minutes. His address was brief but emphatic, and delivered with a manly dignity and fervid expression of gratitude, that powerfully operated on the audience. At one time the applause was so great that I thought it was likely to subdue his firmness; but he paused for a moment, and then resumed his speech with all the manly buoyancy of his character.

The substance of his address was to say, that he was fully impressed with a sense of the kindness which he had so long experienced from the public, and to assure the audience, that though many might be more worthy of their favour, none could exceed him in zeal in their service. Madame Mara was deeply affected by this speech, and I heartily sympathized in her emotions.

Many years after he retired from the stage, he was induced to quit his retreat at St. Edmund's Bury, and to revisit London for the purpose of performing Charles, in "The School for Scandal," for the benefit of his old friend King. I passed him in the street a day or two before the performance took place, and could but feel pleasure in seeing how little his person had been altered by time. There was the same easy and manly gait, though less of that spirited and careless buoyancy, which had marked his earlier years. He seemed to walk with a kind of philosophic indifference to the things around him, and in so unaffected a manner, that he probably passed unnoticed by those who did not know his person, except from his gentlemanly appearance. There was something in his manner, and in the intelligence in his face, which induced me, even on this casual glance, to regret that I had not the pleasure of being acquainted with him.

It was impossible for me to miss his performance, and I joined with my friend the celebrated Mrs. Robinson in taking a box sufficient for herself, her daughter, one of her female friends, and myself, in the lower range of boxes level with the pit. I shall not attempt to describe the tumultuous reception which he experienced from as large an audience as it was possible for the theatre to contain, when the curtain was withdrawn and presented him at the convivial table. It was repeatedly renewed, and he came forward and bowed to the audience. Never, perhaps, on any occasion, did an individual in any station receive more hearty demonstrations of public esteem and approbation. It is sufficient to add, that there was no abatement of his spirit and humour in his performance of the character, or of his corporeal activity.

In the last scene of the play, when Lady Teazle happened to drop her fan, there was a race among the male performers to pick it up and present it to her, but Mr. Smith got the start of them all, and delivered it to her with such unaffected ease and elegance, that the audience were struck with the incident, and strongly expressed their applause.

This fine display of comic genius, which confirmed the impressions

that his acting made upon me in my early days, induced me to write an account of it the same night for a daily newspaper entitled "The True Briton," of which I was then a proprietor; and Mr. Smith was so well satisfied with it, that he sent his thanks to the editor, declaring that he thought it one of "the brightest eulogiums he had received during his theatrical career," and added a copy of the verses written by himself, and which he had delivered at the end of the play. The original letter, after his death, I presented to his amiable widow, who is still living, I hope, in good health at Bury St. Edmund's, with her venerable sisters.

I took a copy of this letter for the gratification of my own pride, but it was unluckily lost upon the sudden and unexpected removal of my papers from the Sun office in the Strand.

To resume the subject of his biography. Urged by Mr. Hill, and encouraged by Mr. Powell of Drury-lane theatre, who had been patronized by Mr. Smith and recommended by him to that theatre, I ventured to apply to Mr. Smith for a sketch of his public life, and endeavoured to excuse the liberty by acknowledging myself the author of the account of his performance for the benefit of Mr. King, with which he had declared himself to have been so much gratified. I received a very kind answer, in which he promised to give me the sketch I had requested. In a day or two after I received a brief account of his education, his residence at Cambridge university, and the general course of his theatrical life. The very next day, however, I received a letter from him, earnestly entreating me to send his manuscript back by return of post, alleging that on reflection he could not be guilty of the vanity of supposing that any of his professional or private concerns could possibly be worthy of record, and interesting to the world at large. I therefore contented myself with reading the manuscript, which was well and modestly written, and returned it by post the same day, though not without reluctance, as it would really have been a very interesting memoir of a gentleman, a scholar, and an actor, who was long and deservedly a favourite with the public.

But though my application to Mr. Smith for some memorial of his professional life was unsuccessful, it was productive of a correspondence which lasted some years; and I have between twenty and thirty letters from him, all written with the spirit which animated his public and private character. They also manifest his critical judgment, candour, and taste, as well as his classical attainments. There does not appear the least trace of envy towards any of the actors who were his contemporaries; but on the contrary a liberal tribute to their professional merit, particularly to Mr. Garrick, of whom he takes every opportunity of speaking with enthusiasm; though he is so candid in expressing his opinion of Barry as to say, that in some scenes he was equal to Garrick, and in love scenes even superior to him.



Mr. Smith must be considered as a competent judge, and he was also an excellent actor. In one of his letters he says, that Mr. Garrick was so perfect in every character he represented as to be wholly absorbed in the assumption of it.

In another of his letters he says, "Garrick, with all natural graces and perfections, must ever in my now decaying judgment stand alone — 'The front of Jove himself.' Among the chief blessings of my life I ever held the greatest to be that I was bred at Eton, and born in the days of Garrick." Such is the opinion of an actor who was a kind of competitor of Garrick; and such was the opinion of all the most judicious men with whom I ever was acquainted, who were deeply conversant with human nature and the stage.

Mr. Smith's repugnance to all biographical records, and even to all posthumous memorials, increased with age and his further experience of the vanity of life, for he exacted a promise from his amiable lady that nothing of the kind should be published on his decease; and he was buried with so little pomp and ceremony, that there is no stone or any other indication to mark the spot where his remains are interred.

My late friend Jessé Foot, in his *Life of Arthur Murphy*, thus relates the opinion of the latter: "Whenever he spoke of Mr. Smith's merits as an actor, he never failed to add, that he was not only a gentleman himself, but always gave a gentlemanly character to his profession." Mr. Smith was a constant frequenter of Newmarket course from his early life, and almost to the close of his very advanced age. He had formed high connexions at college, and added to them considerably at Newmarket. I never heard that he engaged in betting, and conclude that he went chiefly to enjoy the sport, and to meet those noble friends whom he retained through life.

Among his earliest and firmest friends was the late Sir George Beaumont, a gentleman of whose merits and accomplishments it is difficult for panegyric to exaggerate. This excellent baronet was not only a sound critic on the fine arts, but also an admirable artist. He was some time a pupil of Wilson, the celebrated landscape painter, and purchased many of his best works, some of which he liberally presented to the National Gallery. Sir George retained his attachment to Mr. Smith till the close of his life; and a few years before his death, engaged Mr. Jackson, the royal academician, to take a journey to Bury in order to paint a portrait of him when he was turned of eighty years of age. Sir George had a portrait of him painted at the age of forty. A print from the last portrait by Jackson was well executed, and much valued by his friends. It expressed an intelligent and discerning spirit, that time could not subdue.

On Mr. Smith's last visit to the metropolis, he resided at the hotel in King-street, Covent Garden. In a day or two after he arrived, he sent a note to me, telling me that, if I could call on him at eleven the following morning, we might chat for half an hour, but not more, as

he expected Sir George Beaumont to call and take him in his carriage to see some of his old friends, particularly Lord Mulgrave and General Phipps. I was on the point of going to him when he came to the Sun office on foot, for fear, as he said, that some mistake had arisen; and for about a quarter of an hour conversed with us, and displayed all his original animation. I regret that I was prevented from calling on him at the hotel, for then I should probably have been introduced to Mrs. Smith, whom I have never seen, as they were too much engaged in a round of visits for me to have a chance of another interview.

In the evening of that day I met him again in the green-room of Drury-lane theatre, still under the zealous convoy of Sir George Beaumont, who seemed to be delighted to see the respect which the veteran received from the performers, who thronged round him, and were all emulous to testify their esteem and veneration.

On his return to Bury, he resumed his correspondence with me, and continued it until a very short time before his decease; even his very last letters were characterized by his usual vivacity and vigour. His attachment to Newmarket began early, and he visited the course till his bodily strength was nearly exhausted, and he could go no longer. It is understood that in his engagements with the London manager, he always reserved a right to visit Newmarket at the usual seasons, probably with a proportionable reduction of his salary.

Sir George Beaumont told me that Mr. Smith prided himself on never having, during the whole of his theatrical life, blacked his face or descended through a trap-door. Of course he never performed Othello, Oroonoko, or Zanga, though he would doubtless have rendered ample justice to those characters. Churchill says of him—

Smith, the genteel, the airy and the smart,  
Smith has just gone to school to say his part;

from which it may be inferred that the poet thought he chiefly excelled in comedy; and the epithets which the bard has applied to him, prove that in his opinion he performed his comic parts with all requisite ease and gayety. Indeed, to Ross, who was his contemporary for a long period at Covent Garden theatre, the chief characters in tragedy were assigned; and Ross, though so sprightly in private life, was too heavy, and sometimes too sluggish for the comic muse.

As the reader may probably be gratified in seeing a specimen of his poetical powers, I shall insert the following lines, which I received in one of his letters, but not till I had repeatedly requested something of that description.

#### LINES

*Written after passing the evening with a friend in the Temple, 1780.*

Last night as with my friend I sat,  
Methought I cared no more for fate  
Than fate might care for me;  
In gayety and easy chat,  
We smiled at *this* and laugh'd at *that*,  
With hearts brim-full of glee.

N



Cheerly the minutes danced away,  
Till twilight oped the dawn of day,  
Yet free from care's dull power;  
We heeded not the watchman's knock,  
Nor ask'd our spirits what's o'clock,  
Nor mark'd the vulgar hour.

But Prudence whisper'd we must part,  
Though bright oach eye, alive each heart,  
For all was well *within*;  
Yet parting cheek'd our present bliss,  
We both shook hands and join'd in this,  
That *daylight* proved a *sin*.\*

"So," adds he in his letter, "the withered yellow leaf is dropping from the bough, and leaves no trace behind."

I received from him also a translation of an ode of Horace, and also of a passage in Juvenal, which fully evinced his taste and scholarship, but I thought an original effusion of his pen would be more acceptable. I sincerely regret that I did not know him at an early period, as I am convinced his manly spirit and philosophic indifference to the ordinary cares of life would have corrected a despondency to which I have always been subject, though I have constantly prevented it from appearing in company.

Before Smith's retirement from the stage, a number of gentlemen, friends of his and admirers of the drama, who formed what was styled "The Phoenix Club," of which he was a member, presented to him an elegant and valuable cup, which he found at his house on his return from the theatre, with the following inscription:—

TO WILLIAM SMITH, Esq.  
On his retirement from the stage.  
They knew him well, Horatio.

Feeling the highest veneration for the memory of Garrick, in which I am supported by the testimony of Mr. Const and other friends who had more opportunities of judging of his merit, particularly Sir George Beaumont, who was a good actor himself, I shall cite a few passages from the letters of Mr. Smith. "We may safely rate Garrick," he says, "

Omnium Histrionum facile princeps,

and in my humble opinion this was the least part of his excellence. As a man I admired, loved, and honoured him—his merits were great, his benevolence and generosity, though by some disputed, were, to *my certain knowledge*, diffusive and abundant. In bargains, perhaps, he was keen, but punctual. *Fiat justitia!*"

"As to Garrick, my utmost ambition as an actor was to be thought worthy to hold up his train."

"Of Garrick and Barry, where *love* was the burthen or rather sup-

\* *Comus*.

port of the scene, Barry was at least equal to Roscius. Romeo, Castalio, Othello, Varaves, and Jaffier were *his own*. In the more commanding passions, where the brain forced its workings through the magic powers of the eye, Mr. Garrick was beyond comparison in *every thing*; but Barry *next* to him. Allowing each his merit, I have thought for nearly seventy years, all that were eminent were plants of Garrick's rearing under his own fostering hand in his own garden, and Nature the designer. My embers will a little warm when I think of his departed spirit."

"Of Mr. Garrick, whom I first saw and admired at Goodman's Fields, in the year 1740, I can never speak but with idolatry, and have ever looked upon it as one great blessing in my life to have lived in the days of Garrick."

I could quote many more passages from Mr. Smith's letters, in which he expresses his enthusiastic admiration of Garrick, but as they have all the same tenor and substance, it is needless to add to the subject.

As far as I can recollect, Mr. Smith was principally distinguished for his Hamlet, Richard, and Macbeth, in tragedy; and Volpone, Captain Plume, and Archer, in comedy. I remember I was particularly struck with the difference in the demeanour of Mr. Smith, and "Honest Tom King," when the latter, just before the dropping of the curtain, advanced in the sight of the audience, and with both his hands extended to shake those of Smith, as if to thank him for his kindness in quitting his retreat, after a long absence, to perform for the benefit of an old friend, whose declining fortunes rendered such an exertion necessary. King's action on this occasion manifested, amid all the warmth of gratitude, the formality of Sir Peter Teazle, while that of Smith exhibited the easy freedom and generosity of Charles Surface, who seemed to receive all such testimonies as an intrusion upon the liberal gayety of his natural disposition.

I have dwelt the longer upon the subject of Mr. Smith, because I consider him as an extraordinary individual. With a character of singular animation, and in his early days, while at Cambridge university, distinguished by the designation of the "Young Buck of the College," ready for any spirited enterprise, he was an attentive student, and became an excellent scholar. Though, at the time he entered upon the stage, he assumed a profession that was by no means held in such respect as it has since acquired, yet he retained all his college connexions, which consisted of some of the chief nobility of the country.

It appears to me that he could not have been thrown into any situation in life in which he would not have acquitted himself with honour. It never was my good fortune to sit with him at the same table in company, but I can readily conceive that conversation must have derived its chief spring and stimulus from the buoyancy of his spirit. He was always affable to his inferiors in the theatre, but at the same time so guarded in manner that he was treated with cautious respect.

His many letters to me display the same animated character, and are generally seasoned with classical quotations, which, till his eighty-



ninth year, proved that his love and taste for literature continued to be one of his unabated attachments. Though I never had the pleasure of being personally introduced to Mrs. Smith, I have nevertheless received several letters from her since the death of her husband, all of which are marked by good sense, amiable feeling, conjugal affection, and the regret naturally attending so melancholy a deprivation.

---

## CHAPTER XL.

**GIBSON and RIDOUT.** These actors many years ago were proprietors of the Liverpool theatre. They had previously appeared on the London stage, but without any professional distinction; yet they rose to such a high reputation on the Liverpool boards, that they were deemed in Liverpool above all competition. The good people of Liverpool are, however, so much improved in theatrical taste and judgment, that they are not now likely to be gratified except by first-rate abilities.

To prove the high estimation in which Gibson and Ridout were held by the better people of Liverpool, on some subject of importance to the commercial interests of that place, when several of the principal merchants were quitting the town in order to attend the House of Commons, as they were setting off for that purpose, even at the door of the coach, they were entreated to go, as soon as they reached London, and see Garrick perform, that they might know whether he was equal to Gibson and Ridout. The deputies from the town, therefore, as soon as their parliamentary business was settled, went to see Garrick. The result of their embassy was, of course, communicated to the town before their return, and they arrived at Liverpool a few days after. Several of their friends had waited their arrival, and as soon as the coach-door was opened, the first question addressed to the travellers was, "Well, is Garrick equal to Gibson and Ridout?" The answer was, "Oh! by no means; Garrick would be nothing in Liverpool, compared with Gibson and Ridout." Such, at that time, was the standard of theatrical taste at Liverpool, which now, perhaps, may rank with any provincial town, if not with the metropolis itself, in a due estimation of theatrical talents.

Ridout had quitted the London stage long before my time, but of Gibson's person I have a faint recollection, as he was some years stationary at Covent Garden theatre, and was generally styled King Gibson, because he performed *Cymbeline*, and other heavy old monarchs and courtiers. His person was bulky, and there was a ponderous sort of nature in his acting which would by no means suit the taste of the present times. He was a prudent and good-natured man, and the following anecdote is cited as a proof of the kindness of his disposition.

The inferior actors at that period were careless and dissipated, and

as soon as the business of the night was over, they generally spent the remainder of it at low public-houses, which were much frequented in consequence of their being the resort of the theatrical fraternity. A young man, who had recently been engaged at Covent Garden theatre, had come from some provincial company, and was hardly known to any of the London actors, conducted himself with such modest diffidence that he attracted the notice of the veteran Gibson, who one day after rehearsal took him aside, and addressed him to the following purpose: "Young man, I have observed your modest demeanour, and I see with some satisfaction that you are not intimate with the actors; let me advise you, as an old man well acquainted with life, to avoid public-houses. When you are no longer required at the theatre, go home, study any part that may be assigned to you, take a glass of small-beer to refresh yourself before you go to bed, and if it happens to be the king's birth-day, or the news of a great victory, or any occasion of national joy has occurred, put a little nutmeg and sugar in it."

I think I was indebted for this ludicrous story to the late Mr. John Kemble. It is by all accounts characteristic of the economical wisdom of King Gibson. Since the time of the Liverpool managers above mentioned, the Liverpool stage has been in the hands of many eminent performers, the last of whom was the late excellent comic actor Mr. Lewis. His son now possesses it, and conducts it with such judgment and propriety as fully to maintain the reputation which it had acquired under the management of his estimable father.

Stephen Kemble, who was an accurate observer of human life, and an able delineator of character and manners, was so intelligent and humorous a companion, that he was received with respect into the best company in the several provincial towns, which he occasionally visited in the exercise of his profession. This favourable reception is the more honourable to his character and conduct, because the theatrical tribe are held in very little respect in the provinces. The following instance, while it is a proof of the respect in which he was held, is a proof also of the indifference, bordering on contempt, with which country actors are treated.

He once told me, that while he was walking in a town in Ireland with the mayor, who *honoured* him with his arm, one of the inferior actors bowed to the magistrate with the most obsequious humility, but did not attract any notice. The man then ran before them, and at another convenient spot repeated his humiliating obeisance. Still, however, he was passed without observation. Again he ran to a place where he thought he was more likely to draw attention, but was equally unsuccessful. Anxious to testify his respect for the mayor, he tried again at another convenient point, manifesting, if possible, a more obsequious courtesy. At length the obduracy of the mayor softened, though not subdued in pride; he turned his head to look at the persevering actor, but without even a nod of recognition, and hastily uttered, "I see you, I see you," which the poor actor considered as an act of gracious condescension.

MR. WALKER, the author of "The Pronouncing Dictionary," and



other useful and valuable works, I knew and held in great esteem for his talents, attainments, and moral worth. He was a firm, I had almost said a bigoted Roman Catholic, but, as religion operated more upon his conduct than upon his opinions, he ought to be exempted from such an epithet. He had been an actor in the earlier part of his life, but not rising to any distinction, he quitted the stage, became a teacher of elocution, in which he was very successful, and, with his various publications, was enabled to live very respectably, and at his death to leave property to the amount of about 5000*l*. He was a tall man, and the print prefixed to his dictionary is a strong likeness.

I once asked him why he left the stage, and he modestly answered that it was because he was conscious he could never attain an eminent station. I told him I had heard he was famous for his performance of Downright. "Ah! sir," said he, "the public were too kind to me in that respect, but I think time and experience would enable me to perform it much better." He spoke of Garrick with warm admiration, and was stored with anecdotes of the old performers of his time, which he related with precision, if not with much humour.

My late friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, assured me, that Walker was not a Latin scholar; but his dictionary is so elaborate, displays such unwearied research, and is marked by such apparently learned illustrations, that I am persuaded he must have been mistaken. Mr. Walker's wife was an actress, highly respected for her comic talents, and I was informed by those who knew her well, that besides being a very respectable woman, her intelligence and humour in private life rendered her a very instructive and agreeable companion.

Mr. Walker was highly esteemed by the late Mr. John Kemble, by whom I was first introduced to him, and Mr. Walker estimated no less the character of Mr. Kemble.

QUIN the actor. He was a remarkable instance of elevation from a low station in the London theatre to the highest rank in his profession, before the appearance of Garrick. I remember to have seen his name among the *dramatis personæ* in Colley Cibber's alteration of Shakspeare's Richard the Third, where he was rated for the part of Lieutenant of the Tower. His first start into notice was when he was announced to attempt the part of Cato, on the death of Booth, the celebrated representative of the character. Yet I was assured by Mr. Ross, that Quin at last acquired such an ascendancy over the audience, that he took great liberties with them; and on one occasion, when he was performing the part of Zanga, and a drunken man disturbed the pit, he came forward, and said, "Turn that fellow out, or by G— I won't go on." The man was accordingly turned out, and Quin resumed his part.

Mr. Donaldson, who had seen him perform, told me, that nothing could be more ludicrous than when Quin and Mrs. Pritchard, two persons in advanced life, and of very bulky forms, performed the characters of Chamont and Monimia. Quin's declaration,

Two unhappy orphans, alas! we are,

though nothing could be more ludicrous, excited no feelings of ridicule, both were such good performers, and such favourites with the public. Mr. Donaldson further told me there was so much dignity in the person of Quin, that if a foreigner had seen him in the drawing-room at court, he would have taken him for the prime minister.

Quin was, at first, hostile to Garrick, but at length acknowledged his extraordinary genius, which old Cibber never would. As is well known, he was proud of making everybody in company insensibly drunk. On one occasion there was a parson in company, who, as he had been told, was more than a match for the hardest bacchanalian; Quin was therefore ambitious of conquering the parson. All the company were soon overcome with wine, and lay senseless on the floor; Quin was as senseless as the rest, for he had fallen asleep, but still retained his seat. When he waked, he looked with triumph on his prostrate companions, and was anxious to find the parson among them; but in vain; he therefore concluded that the poor man had been taken ill and carried to bed. "But," said Quin, "it was a fine summer morning, and, to my extreme mortification, I saw the parson, through the window, bathing his head before a pump, and a shining steam arising from it, like a glory over the head of an apostle."

A gentleman of Bath, very little and very dull, was extremely fond of being with Quin, and once, when the latter was going to ride in a carriage, begged to accompany him. "No," said Quin, "you are too dull." But as the little gentleman was importunate—"Well," said Quin, "get in, for if any accident happens you will serve as a *linch-pin*."

Quin was accustomed to attend Epsom races, and the landlady of one of the inns, who held him in the highest esteem, always took care to secure a bed for him. On one occasion, however, at a very busy season, she forgot him; and being unable to procure a bed for him in the town, she asked if he would be content to share a bed with a clergyman who had kindly offered him that accommodation. "Well, dame," said Quin, "I'll lie in the same bed with the parson, if you'll promise that he will not give me the itch." Quin entered the bed first, and observing, as the parson followed him, that his shirt was dirty, he exclaimed, "What! parson, are you coming to bed in your *cassock*?"

Quin was not fond of the clergy, whom he generally stigmatized as hypocrites. Happening one day to dine at the house of a clergyman at Bath, where all the rest of the company were of the same profession, the master of the house apologized for not having the dinner ready in due time, alleging that his old turnspit had thought proper to absent himself, and he had been obliged to have persons that ill supplied his place. The conversation after dinner chiefly related to the value of certain livings, and as to what the several incumbents paid their curates; till at length Quin was tired, and signified that he would take his evening walk. As he was leaving the passage, the old turnspit returned from his excursion, hanging his head, and creeping in as if conscious of guilt. Quin, as he passed, gave him a slight blow



on the head, saying—"Ah! damn you, what, you must keep a curate too!"

Dining one day at a public ordinary, where was a sort of struggle to get at the dishes, Quin said, "Gentlemen, if ever I dine at an ordinary again, I will have basket-handled knives."

On a similar occasion, when one of the company had helped himself to a very large piece of bread, Quin stretched out his hand to take hold of it. The person to whom it belonged prevented him, saying, "Sir, that is my bread." "I beg your pardon," said Quin, "I took it for the loaf."

Another time, at dinner, a gentleman had taken upon his plate a large quantity of pudding, and said, "Mr. Quin, let me recommend this pudding to you." "With all my heart," said Quin, looking at the gentleman's plate, and then at the dish, "but which is the pudding?" This anecdote I heard from Mr. Sheridan.

Quin, in order to give weight to particular passages, was apt to pause too long. When he once performed Horatio in "The Fair Penitent," and was challenged by Lothario to meet him the following morning, "A mile among the rocks," Quin paused so long before he said, "I'll meet thee there," that a man in the gallery bawled out,—"Why don't you give the gentleman an answer, whether you will or no."

Quin was once annoyed by a very effeminate coxcomb in a coffee-room at Bath, who looked at him steadily, and observing that Quin frowned on him, he asked the waiter, in a whisper—"Who is that *man*?" Quin, who heard him, roared out to the waiter—"Who is that *thing*?" "Sir Edward S——'s son," said the waiter. "You lie, you dog," said Quin, "*it is his daughter.*"

Theophilus Cibber once vehemently attacked Quin in a coffee-room, accusing him of having said that he knew him when he had not any shirts to his back. "I beg your pardon, sir," said he, "you have been misinformed:" and when Cibber thought he ought to be satisfied with the denial, Quin added: "I said I knew you when you had not a *shirt* to your back."

Theophilus Cibber was by no means wanting in abilities or humour. He had ill-formed legs, and having projected one of them in company, which was noticed with a laugh, he offered to lay a wager that there was a worse in company; and it being accepted, he put forward his other leg, which was indeed more ill-shaped than the other.

Quin was once invited by Mrs. Clive to stay a few days with her at Strawberry Hill. Having walked round her garden, she asked him if he had seen her pond, a small piece of water. "Yes, Kate," said he, "I have seen your *basin*, but did not see a washball."

It is a common practice with affectionate mothers to have their children brought down after dinner, that they may show their talents to the company. On an occasion of this kind, when Quin had been annoyed by the spouting of Master Jacky and the singing of Miss Anna Maria, he was heard to grumble to himself: "Oh, the injured memory of Herod!"

When determined to pay a visit to Plymouth for the chief purpose of eating John-dory, a friend wrote to the landlord of the principal inn, desiring him to show all possible attention to Mr. Quin, to procure him the best claret, and to promote his comfort by all the means in his power. The landlord, proud of his guest, soon after Quin's arrival, offered him the use of his horse to procure a good appetite. Quin accepted the offer; but as the horse was a very hard trotter, when the landlord asked him if he would have him next day—"No, landlord," said he, "when I want my bottom kicked again, I will hire a porter."

Mrs. Hallam, the aunt of the late Mrs. Mattocks, was an actress at Covent Garden theatre during the time of Quin. At this period a pantomime was then at the height of its popularity, and one of the most successful sights was Harlequin jumping through a cask. Mrs. Hallam was a very large woman. As the cask was in requisition every night, it remained behind the scenes; and Quin happening to stumble against it, exclaimed: "Why don't you take away Mrs. Hallam's *stays*."

I had this story from Mrs. Mattocks, who said her aunt told her that she had been a good actress in her day; but, said Mrs. M., I had no other authority. When Quin was once delivering the speech of Jaques in "As You like It," describing the seven ages, an effeminate man, who performed Amicus, regardless of the speech, sat upon the very edge of the bench in the banquet scene, and overturned it, falling himself on the ground. Quin, turning indignantly on the prostrate coxcomb, exclaimed: "Damn it, *madam*, can't you *sit* on your *side-saddle*." I derived this anecdote also from Mrs. Mattocks, who was a good actress and a sprightly woman.

The husband of Mrs. Clive was a barrister, a very learned and intelligent man, by all accounts, but without practice in his profession; he was therefore invited to become the domestic companion of Mr. Ince, a gentleman of fortune, and reputed to be the Templar in the club of the Spectator. Mr. Ince was well known to be a frequent contributor to that admirable periodical work. My old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck, of the British Museum, knew Mr. Ince, and told me that he retained the practice, as mentioned in the Spectator, of visiting the play-house almost every evening, as long as his health and age would admit.

It seems strange that Horace Walpole, a man of learning and elegant taste, should have been so much attached to Mrs. Clive, whose manners were rough and vulgar; particularly as after her death he transferred his partiality to one of the accomplished Miss Berrys, and offered to marry her, that he might leave her a fortune and a title. Mrs. Clive's person exempted her from temptation, and her character was unimpeached; but though she was well acquainted with the world, it is hardly to be supposed that she could be adequately supplied with conversation for such a scholar, and man of taste, as Horace Walpole. On her death, he wrote a poetical epitaph upon her, in which he said that Comedy died with Clive. In consequence.



of this panegyric, Dr. Wolcot wrote the following lines, which are not printed in his works.

Horace, of Strawberry Hill I mean, not Rome,  
Lo ! all thy geese are swans, I do presume ;  
Truth and thy verses seem not to agree :  
Know, Comedy is hearty, all alive !  
The comic Muse no more expired with Clive  
Than dame Humility will die with thee.

My late worthy old friend, Mr. George Nicol of Pall Mall, told me, that while he was on a visit to Horace Walpole, soon after Mr. Gifford's *Bæviad* was published, Walpole, then Lord Orford, said, it was "quite refreshing to find such a work amid all the sickening trash which was pouring upon the world under the name of poetry."

---

## CHAPTER XLI.

MRS. SIDDONS. It might well be thought strange, if, after having begun with noticing Garrick, in my observations on theatrical performers, I should omit so great an actress as Mrs. Siddons. He was certainly the greatest actor, in my opinion, that I have ever seen; and Mrs. Siddons the greatest tragic actress. But her merits are so well known, and so widely and justly admired, that it would be a sort of presumption in me to attempt to add to the fame which she has so deservedly acquired.

Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Crawford; when the latter was Mrs. Barry, were the greatest female ornaments of the stage that I had ever witnessed previously to the appearance of Mrs. Siddons; and I feel disposed to say no more than that she possessed all the dignity of the former and all the tenderness of the latter. Mrs. Barry, indeed, was also a comic actress of no ordinary powers, and her performance of *Rosalind*, in "*As You like It*," was in my humble estimation one of the most perfect personations ever exhibited on the stage.

Mrs. Siddons seems to me to have been born for tragedy. I have seen her in *Rosalind*, and though nothing could be more correct than her conception of the character, or more graceful and dignified where the princess is to appear, yet in the lighter scenes of the part it was impossible for her to throw off that pensive disposition which seemed to pervade her nature. I have had the pleasure of being intimate with her for many years, and was not only favoured with her friendship, but with her epistolary correspondence during her occasional absence from town, and I retain many of her letters, with which even her request would not induce me to part.

I think I may venture to say, that I studied her character as attentively as she ever did any character which she represented with such

superior ability on the stage. Her mind is lofty, and her sentiments are always dignified or tender. She would have been capable of sustaining with appropriate merit in real life any of the highest female characters which she has assumed in her profession. Thus much I say upon ample observation and full conviction; and I consider any contrary opinions that may have prevailed against her, at any time, as the result of malice and envy of her professional excellence, and the reputation and prosperity which have attended it.

I shall now drop a subject to which I cannot do justice, and mention a circumstance that I hope she will excuse me for relating, as it shows the uncertainty of friendship, and the caution which is necessary in forming such a connexion. I called on her one morning, when I found her in the act of burning some letters of her own which had been returned to her by the executor of the gentleman to whom they had been addressed. As I sat nearer to the fire, she handed them to me, as she read them in succession, to throw into it. As I was going to dispose of one in this manner, a printed paper dropped out of it, which she must have overlooked. I took it up, and found that it consisted of some verses which had appeared in "The St. James's Chronicle," and which contained some very severe strictures on her character. The name of the subject of this satire was not printed, but appeared in manuscript on the top of the lines in the handwriting of her deceased correspondent. As no real friend of Mrs. Siddons could thus invidiously point out the object, it struck me, as I had heard the departed person was a poet, that he had attacked her at one time for the purpose of insidiously defending her at another. She seemed to be surprised and shocked at this discovery, and I then ventured to ask her if her departed friend had ever, like Stukely in the play, endeavoured to excite her jealousy against Mr. Siddons. After a short pause, she said she remembered he had once hinted to her that Mr. Siddons had a mistress at Chelsea. The mystery then seemed to be revealed, and the design of the writer developed, as Mrs. Siddons was at that time in the fulness of her personal beauty. I left her in a state of consternation, and called on her in the evening, when I found her father and mother, to whom the matter had been communicated; but they testified no surprise, and said they had never liked the man, and thought that he had some wicked purpose in view. This anecdote cannot be uninteresting, as it illustrates human nature, and relates to a distinguished and meritorious individual.

I must here pay a short tribute to the memory of Mr. Siddons, whose character I always held in high respect. He was a handsome, gentlemanly-looking man, with a good understanding and pleasing and affable manners. He also possessed literary talents, and when he was the proprietor of Sadler's Wells he wrote many humorous songs, which were very popular at that theatre. Mr. Siddons had been overshadowed by the great talents of his wife; but if she had only adorned the domestic circle by her virtues and good sense, he would then have appeared fully upon an equality with such a partner,



to all who might have had the pleasure of being acquainted with him. Many cheerful hours I have passed with him and the family. I was for many years in the habit of dining with Mr. John Kemble on Christmas-day, and on old Christmas-day with Mr. Siddons and his family, till his declining health obliged him to retire to Bath. It ought to be mentioned to the honour of his conjugal character, that when a false and malignant insinuation against Mrs. Siddons appeared in one of the public prints, he publicly offered a thousand pounds for the discovery of the anonymous libeller.

Mr. William Gifford was much attached to Mr. Waldron, whom I may properly introduce in this place, as he was an old friend of mine, and a very respectable actor. Mr. Waldron perhaps was only second to Mr. Isaac Reed in knowledge of dramatic productions of the earliest periods. He was a dramatic writer of real talents, and the author of several poems in the style of Milton's "L'Allegro." He had collected many curious particulars respecting the history of the British drama. Mr. Gifford assured me that he had often derived much information from the stores collected by Mr. Waldron, and sincerely regretted his death, not only as a friend, but as a man abounding in valuable knowledge. As Mr. Waldron left two sons, who are both well-educated men, it is surprising that the manuscripts of their respectable father have not been presented to the world.

I met Mr. Waldron, on the publication of Mr. Gifford's edition of "Ben Jonson," carrying the nine bulky volumes home through the park, so delighted with having had them presented to him by Mr. Gifford, as if he thought they could not be safe in any hands but his own. Mr. Gifford presented them to me at the same time, but, however proud I was of the gift, I ventured to send them home by a deputy.

Mr. Waldron was much respected also by Mr. Kemble. He was very lively and facetious in company, and always good-natured and well-bred. Soon after the commencement of the West India Docks, a party was formed to view the excavations. My late friend Admiral Schank, then a captain, was one of the commissioners of the Transport Board, and he took us in one of the transport-barges.

The late Mr. Penneck of the British Museum, Mr. Kemble, myself, and some friends of Captain Schank, were of the party. We had a plentiful dinner on board the barge, and passed some pleasant hours, after we had farther gratified our curiosity with a peep at the arsenal at Woolwich. Before we left the vessel to return home in stages, Mr. Kemble said to me, "I should be glad to invite Captain Schank to dine with me, but I suppose nothing would induce him to sleep out of this vessel;" and he was surprised when I told him that the captain kept a handsome establishment in Leicester-square, and a carriage.

Here I must pause to pay a tribute of respect to my old and worthy friend Admiral Schank, who was a true British tar, of a hospitable spirit, and manly sincerity. He was married to a very amiable and intelligent lady, a sister of Sir William Grant, late Master of the Rolls.

Admiral Schank had a high reputation in the navy, and was the inventor of a vessel named the *Wolverine*. For some years before his death he suffered by a gradual loss of sight, and at last became totally blind. He had consulted several surgeons, who told him that his disorder was a commencing cataract, and at length he consulted me. I told him with much regret that his disorder was not a cataract, which admitted of relief, but that I feared it would prove a gutta-serena. He however went to several parts of the kingdom, where persons resided who were reputed to be successful in treating disorders of the eye, but in vain; and after many a fruitless journey he said, "I wish I had depended on my friend Taylor's opinion at first, for I should then have saved myself from disappointment, and the expense of at least three hundred pounds."

Mr. Kemble, as the manager of a theatre, conducted himself with great kindness towards the performers, and never attempted to exert any unfriendly authority. He was always unwilling to deprive an actor of any part that he had been accustomed to perform, or to oblige him to assume, or continue to perform, a character that did not please him.

He was very intimate with Suett the actor, when he first came to London, and they used frequently to ride on horseback together. He deeply lamented the habit of drinking which Suett had acquired by associating with the lower performers. He said that Suett had been a man of refined sentiments, had an elegant taste, and would have remained so if it had not been for that unfortunate habit. Suett was a man of good sense, with a kind and benevolent disposition.

He had a very high opinion of Mr. Kemble, who had desired him to send his son to him every morning, and he would hear him read. The boy had neglected to go one morning, and Suett, who had a quaint formality in his manner, reproached him for having slighted the instructions of so great a man, and then added, "If you do not attend that great man, I will most certainly withdraw my eye of favour from you."

I attended the funeral of Miss Chapman, of Covent Garden theatre. She was a good actress and a sensible woman. Suett had known her on the York stage, and had a great friendship for her. A little before the mournful cavalcade set out from her apartments in James-street, Covent Garden, Suett came to the house in mourning, and begged that he might be permitted to join in paying the last tribute of friendship to the departed lady. He was admitted into the same coach with me and the other mourners, and showed evident proofs of unaffected grief all the way to the grave.

Suett was capable of performing characters of grave or facetious humour, but his element was broad farce. I once passed an evening with him and the elder Bannister, at the house of my friend George Colman, in Upper Tichfield-street, and saw him carefully home to his lodgings in Martlett's Court, Bow-street, at five in the morning; a matter of some difficulty, as he had sacrificed too freely to the



bottle, and the weather was very bad. But I esteemed the man, and was diverted with his odd humour all the way.

He was much respected by the other performers, most of whom attended his burial in St. Paul's church-yard. He was originally a chorister in that cathedral, and composed many songs, the words of which were written by himself. Both music and words were marked by taste and feeling. After his funeral, the actors, who are never wanting in wagghery, pretended that they heard him say in his coffin, "My dragons, what are you a'ter?" expressions which he was in the habit of using. He would have been in the prime of life, if his health had not been injured by his convivial disposition.

It would be improper to omit here an important incident in the life of Mr. Kemble. After the destruction of Covent Garden theatre by fire, his friends and the public felt concerned for his loss, as he had embarked the whole of his property in that concern. I was walking in the Strand, when I heard him call me from his carriage. With a tone of exultation he said, "Taylor, have you heard what the Duke of Northumberland has done for me?" I answered in the negative. "Why," he said, "a gentleman waited on me by desire of the duke, to express his grace's sincere concern for the melancholy event which had occurred, and to signify that, if 10,000*l.* would be of use to me in the present emergency, his grace would order that this sum should be advanced to me. I expressed my gratitude as well as my surprise at so generous an offer, but desired the gentleman to say that as it never could be in my power to repay his grace, I felt myself obliged to decline his noble offer. The gentleman called on me again to repeat the offer, and I then said I must still decline to avail myself of his grace's kindness; for that, so far from being able to repay the principal of so large a sum, I did not think it would ever be in my power to discharge even the interest. The gentleman took this message to his grace, but called on me a third time, to tell me that his grace made the offer as an act of friendship, and therefore he should never require from me either interest or principal."

Such was precisely the manner in which Mr. Kemble related this magnificent act of the late Duke of Northumberland to me. I waited on Mr. Kemble on the following Sunday morning, and he then related the cause which had operated so generously on the mind of the duke. He said that Dr. Raine, then master of the Charterhouse, called on him one morning, and expressed his wish that he would give some lessons to a young nobleman on the art of reading, as it was probable the person in question would be a member of parliament, and Mr. Kemble of course would be liberally rewarded for his trouble. Kemble told the doctor that he had long declined to give instructions of that nature, considering them as wholly useless; that if the person had good sense and a good ear, he would want no instruction; and if not, that instruction would be ineffectual. The doctor expressed his regret that Kemble had declined the task, observing he came by the desire of the Duke of Northumberland, and that Lord Percy was the intended pupil. "Oh!" said Kemble, "if

it is his grace's desire, I was so much indebted to him at a very interesting period of my life, that there is nothing I would not undertake to testify my respect and gratitude." He then readily consented to receive Lord Percy, and give the best instructions in his power. He then related the obligation which he was under to the duke in the following manner:—

"When I was an actor," said he, "in a theatrical company at Doncaster, I had written a tragedy, the hero of which was Belisarius; and as the duke, then Lord Percy, was quartered there with his regiment, the manager advised me to wait upon his lordship, and request him to suffer some of his men to attend the entrance of Belisarius into Rome. He immediately said, when I told him the purpose of my visit, that 'he would do any thing to show his respect for so great a hero as Belisarius, and that I should have as many men as I wanted to do honour to his triumph.' The men accordingly attended, the hero appeared in military grandeur, and the play succeeded, raising me high in the opinion of the manager at a time when his good opinion was of importance to me. Dr. Raine told the duke how ready I was to give instructions to Lord Percy, when I knew that it was the desire of his grace; who, hearing what I had said, signified that he should not forget my ready compliance with his wish. Lord Percy called on me, certainly not twelve times, for such lessons as I could give; and this is the magnificent return," added he, "for my poor services."

It may not be improper to add, that the present duke seems to partake of his noble father's feelings towards Mr. Kemble, for he was present in the theatre on the night when Mr. Kemble finally took leave of the public, and I afterward saw his grace join him in the green-room, where a confidential conversation took place between them at a distance from the company in general who were present.

Most of the principal performers of both theatres attended on this occasion, to testify their respect for Mr. Kemble, and many of them expressed a desire of possessing some part of his theatre apparel, and what are styled stage properties, as relics of friendship. He gave his sword to one, his cane to another, and distributed all the articles connected with the character which he had been performing.

On his last visit to this country, he called on me, and I saw an evident appearance of the decline of his health, particularly on his going down stairs, which he appeared to do with difficulty. His brother, Mr. Charles Kemble, kindly invited me to dine with him, that I might see the last of his brother, who was on the eve of returning to Lausanne, and not likely ever to revisit this country. Mr. Kemble took little part in the general conversation, but seemed to be attentive. As he had been accustomed to drink wine, his entire forbearance from it probably injured his health, for I remember dining with him not long before he quitted the stage, and saying, "Come, Johnny, you and I have not had a glass of wine together," and Mrs. Kemble, from the opposite end of the table, said, "I am Johnny, and I'll take a glass with you, for Mr. Kemble does not drink wine."



A friend of mine, who was going to Switzerland, requested that I would give him a letter of introduction to him, and I did so, but on the morning when he was going to present it, he found that Mr. Kemble was no more. The gentleman sent a letter to me, announcing the melancholy event of his death. I communicated the contents of the letter to the public on the day that it reached me in "The Sun" evening paper, of which I was then proprietor, and gave the original letter to Mr. Charles Kemble.

I have dwelt upon the memory of Mr. Kemble, because I felt a sincere friendship for him, as well as a high respect for his talents, and am convinced that he had a kind and benevolent disposition, and was fully qualified to render himself conspicuous in any province to which he might have devoted his abilities. He was held in the highest regard by his immediate relations, and by all his friends who knew how to appreciate his character.

MR. CHARLES KEMBLE, who now appears to so much advantage on the stage, when he was rather a fine sturdy lad than a young man, held an appointment in a government office, but being anxious to go upon the stage, he consulted me on the subject. I confess that though he was intelligent, and well-educated, there was such a rustic plainness in his manner, that I did not see any promise of excellence in him, and therefore advised him to keep to his situation, which was a progressive one, from which I told him that in due time he would be able to retire on a comfortable independence. He told me that his brother had expressed the same opinion, and had given him the same advice. Hence it appeared that Mr. Kemble and myself were bad prophets, since his brother Charles has displayed abilities which would have done honour to the stage at any period. It may, however, be said that Mr. Kemble, perhaps, saw his brother's talents with eyes more discerning than mine, and only discouraged his theatrical bent from a conviction of the difficulty and uncertainty of the profession.

As Mr. Charles Kemble is at present an ornament of the stage, I must speak of him with reserve, lest I might be suspected of the meanness of flattery; but the estimation in which he is held by the public would fully justify a warm panegyric on his talents. He was very early in life placed for education at a college in Douay, from which he returned with a competent knowledge of the Latin and French languages, and since he has been an established performer in London, he has, I understand, acquired the Italian and German.

As an actor, he is a worthy successor to his brother, particularly in the part of Hamlet; and to say the least of his performance, in a just conception of the author, in animation, variety, and energy, he must satisfy the most rigid critic. His deportment in general is easy and graceful, without affectation, but naturally flowing from his feelings. His Romeo also is an admirable specimen of tragic skill; and in most of his performances in the serious drama, he appears to great advantage. But with all his merit in tragedy, he seems to be more in his element in comic parts. His Charles, in "The School for Scandal," is a performance of great spirit and humour, but per-

haps his Young Mirable, in "The Inconstant," is his most perfect personation. His Archer, in the comedy of "The Stratagem," is also highly creditable to his comic powers; and he has shown the versatility of his talents by his performance of Friar Tuck and Falstaff, though so different from his proper cast.

His talents, however, are not confined to acting, for he has shown literary powers in two dramatic pieces of the serious kind, one entitled "The Point of Honour," founded on a French play; and the other entitled "The Wanderer, or the Rites of Hospitality;" to the last of which I had the pleasure of contributing the prologue. Both of these dramas were successful, and the former is still occasionally brought forward.

It would be strange, indeed, if having noticed the husband I did not mention the wife.

Mrs. CHARLES KEMBLE had various and strong pretensions to public favour while she remained upon the stage. She was an excellent comic actress, and a very graceful dancer. She is besides a scientific musician, and altogether a well-educated lady. Her acting was always marked by a thorough knowledge of the character which she assumed, and supported with truth, spirit, and energy. Her Lucy, in "The Beggar's Opera," was as perfect a performance as ever perhaps appeared on the stage. Her knowledge of the French language and French manners enabled her not only to perform French characters with powerful effect, but even to represent them in old age while she was in the meridian of life, which indeed, she can hardly be said to have now passed. She left the stage without taking a formal leave of it, contrary to the practice of principal performers.

The loss of so deservedly popular an actress must be a subject of regret to the public, for she was too great a favourite ever to incur an unfavourable reception, except during what was called the O. P. riot, which was disgraceful to the public at large, since they suffered a handful of obscure ruffians to interrupt the performances, and injure the theatre for several weeks, by opposing those regulations which were calculated to secure a permanent income to the proprietors, though far below the general measure of their expenses,—to bring persons of high rank to the theatre, to render dramatic novelties more worthy general patronage, and to refine the public taste. Yet, though the proprietors submitted their affairs to the ablest calculators, whose character and judgment were unimpeachable, these rioters were so resolute and so persevering, that they finally effected their purpose.

The insolence which the performers suffered during this shameless storm, and Mrs. Charles Kemble among the rest, might probably operate as one of the causes which induced her to retire from the stage at a time when she was one of its chief comic ornaments.

Mrs. Charles Kemble, like her husband, has displayed her literary powers in an afterpiece, entitled "Personation," in which she appeared in the disguise of an aged French-woman, with admirable humour,



and in a successful comedy, entitled "Smiles and Tears," to which I had again the pleasure of contributing a prologue.

Dodd was an actor whom I knew. He was an admirable representative of the fops in the old comedies, and also of old men. His Sir Andrew, in "Twelfth Night," was a performance of such characteristic merit as to demand the suffrages of critical judgment. He was also a pleasing, though not a professed singer. His Acres, in "The Rivals," Sir Benjamin Backbite, in "The School for Scandal," and Dangle, in "The Critic," were all good specimens of comic humour. He lived with an actress, who came forward in youth with talents and accomplishments, but whose profligate conduct at last wholly deprived her of public favour. During her connexion with Dodd, she ensnared his son, a mere youth, into a similar intercourse, and while this detestable conduct was generally rumoured, she had the confidence to appear upon the stage again, and received strong marks of public disapprobation. She had the hardihood to come forward, and say that the audience had a right to censure her performance, but none to interfere with her private conduct.

She was, however, tolerated again, but her powers were decayed, and when I saw her, her voice was harsh, her manner formal, and she seemed to me to be destitute of spirit and humour. What became of her, or whether she is alive, is hardly known, for she sunk into obscurity.

Dodd was a great collector of old plays, and of the warlike instruments of the American tribes of warriors. He was an agreeable, if not a very intelligent companion, and for his social qualities was generally designated Jemmy Dodd. He had numerous connexions among the higher order of citizens, who always patronised his benefits very liberally. He supported an aged father with filial affection, and gave a good education to his son, who was a respectable member of the church, and has been dead many years.

---

## CHAPTER XLII.

MADAME MARA. I was introduced to this great singer by my late friend Salomon, the celebrated performer on the violin, about the year 1785. I had become acquainted with him some years before. It is well known that in her youth she had been in this country, and supported herself by singing and performing on the guitar. She had been many years abroad, and had cultivated her musical talents with such success, that when she came to London, at the time I was first acquainted with her, she had brought with her the reputation of being the first female singer in Europe. She was immediately engaged for all the great concerts in London, and for the music-meetings in the chief country places.

Having in early life acquired the English language, she retained it; and had almost as great a command of it as any native, except that she pronounced some words with a foreign accent. When she first appeared as a singer at Berlin, hearing that she was a native of Germany, Frederick the Great refused to witness her powers, alleging that she was a German, and therefore could not possibly be a good singer. At length, however, he was persuaded to hear her, and when the concert was over he approached her, and asked if she could sing at sight. She answered in the affirmative, on which he took a piece of manuscript music from his pocket, and asked her if she could sing that. She told me that it was the most difficult piece she had ever met with, but looking over it for a few minutes she told him that she could. "Do then," said the king. She complied, and from that moment his prejudice was at an end, and she became a favourite. Becoming however tired of remaining at Berlin, knowing that her fame had extended to various parts of Europe, where her presence was anxiously desired, and very inviting engagements having been offered her, she asked permission to visit Italy on account of her health. The king, however, would not suffer her to depart.

She had a large and very favourite harpsichord, or pianoforte, and the king, who had set a watch over her, believed that while that remained in Berlin he was secure of her. She was therefore obliged to resort to artifice to effect her escape. She sent the instrument to be repaired, but ordered that instead of being returned to her abode, as soon as the work was done it should be forwarded to Vienna. When she had reason to believe it was secure from capture, she and her husband secretly followed it with all expedition. The wary Frederick was soon apprized of their escape, and despatched a messenger immediately to Joseph the Second, then Emperor of Germany, desiring that he would arrest them. The emperor with great kindness condescended to let them know that there was no resisting the desire of the King of Prussia, and therefore advised them to hurry away as fast as possible, that he might inform the king his messenger had come too late. Whether she came then at once to England I know not.

Soon after I was introduced to her, she sung in the concerts at Oxford, but, sitting during the time when the choruses were performing, as was the custom with superior singers on the Continent, the audience were offended, and the reverend heads of the colleges abruptly dismissed her. Conceiving that public prejudice might arise against her, she requested Salomon to bring me to her, that I might hear her defence and take up her cause. I did so in a public journal, and, refusing all pecuniary recompense, we became very intimate; and I was upon the most friendly terms with her and her husband till an unfortunate attachment on her part to a young musician occasioned a separation between them, and I then discontinued all intercourse with both, that I might not be thought to take part with either. Indeed, I saw what had been going on some time before the event occurred, and took the liberty of giving Madame



Mara some advice on the subject, but, finding it of no avail, I absented myself.

The husband was very much attached to her, though unfortunately more attached to the bottle; all her remonstrances were of no effect; she therefore adopted the measures which I have mentioned to get rid of such a domestic annoyance.

Mara was a very sensible and intelligent man, and by all accounts a good musician. I heard him once perform at the Pantheon in a duet on the violoncello with the celebrated Crosdill, who was unrivalled on that instrument; Mara nevertheless received great applause for the rapidity of his execution. When his resources failed him here, he went to Berlin, where he was a favourite with Prince Henry, the uncle or cousin of the king who had formerly endeavoured to detain him; but, unable to subdue his Bacchanalian propensity, he lost the favour of that prince, and died afterward in obscurity.

When he accompanied his wife to York, during the zenith of her fame, to perform in that city, I had a letter from him, in which, not having acquired much knowledge of the English language, he informed me, "that Charles Fox was then in York, followed everywhere by the *mop*, and that the *ringleaders* of the place were going to give him a dinner."

Madame Mara went abroad not long after the separation, and I heard nothing of her for many years, except that she had settled at Moscow. She was there during the French invasion, and lost two houses and other property amid the patriotic conflagration which saved the country from Gallic plunder and despotism. After many years she returned to England, and surprised me one morning by an unexpected call on me at the Sun office in the Strand. We then resumed our old friendship, and I saw her frequently during her stay in London. Her fame was still high in the musical world; and Sir George Smart, knowing my intimacy with her, applied to me, requesting me to use my influence with her to induce her to accept 50*l.* a night to sing at the oratorios, she having previously demanded 100*l.* alleging that, as Catalani had only that sum, she ought to perform for less. I found her inflexible. She was evidently not aware that her musical powers had declined.

She was soon after engaged to sing at the Hanover-square concerts, but some impediment interfered. Anxious to know how her voice remained, I asked one of the chief musical leaders, and his answer was, "She dined with me on Sunday." "That is no answer to my question," said I; "what is the state of her voice?"—"All I can say," rejoined he, "is, that Mara is still Mara." In fact, they had not courage to tell her of the decay of her talents, but, conceiving she would be less attractive, they evaded the engagement.

When she finally left England, she visited her native country, Hesse Cassel, from which she wrote to me a long letter, telling me how kind the princess had behaved to her, having patronised a concert, provided apartments for her, supported her table, and paid her

travelling expenses to some distance on her return to Revel, where she fixed her residence after the loss of her property at Moscow.

Madame Mara possessed a masculine understanding, and had been so much used to male society, which she preferred, that she was little qualified for an intercourse with the female world. She was animated in company, and uttered humorous and shrewd remarks. During her short stay in this country she was countenanced by some of her former patrons, and had two guineas a lesson for teaching singing, but by no means met with such encouragement as might tempt her to remain. Mr. Broadwood, the great musical instrument manufacturer, lately brought me a message from her, informing me that she had begun to write her reminiscences, half of which she had written in German, and asking my advice whether she should proceed with it in English. I advised her to adopt the latter.

I had introduced Dr. Wolcot to her, whose talents she understood, and whose humour she enjoyed. We passed the evening with her which preceded her departure on her first return to Italy; and asking him to write a farewell impromptu, he immediately wrote the following couplet:—

Dear Maras, ere you cross the Alps,  
You'll catch d—d colds in both your scalps.

MRS. BILLINGTON. I knew this admirable singer when she was very young, and was present when she first appeared in public, and performed a concerto on the piano-forte, at seven years old. Her brother, on the same night, performed a concerto on the violin, when he was nearly of the same age. They both displayed extraordinary powers, even without considering the early period at which they had acquired so much skill. She was born at Baugh, in the year 1765. Her father was of a noble family in Germany, but by the decline of its rank and fortune he was obliged to cultivate his musical talents for a profession. From the early skill of his children, it may be presumed that he was an excellent tutor. He was a harsh and severe man, and partly on account of his temper his wife was induced to quit him, and to support herself as a principal vocal performer at Vauxhall Gardens, retaining the name of Weichsell, though separated from her husband. I regret to say that neither of the parents held forth a good example to their offspring.

Mrs. Billington in her youth entered into a clandestine marriage with Mr. James Billington, a very respectable musician, who belonged to the band of Drury-lane theatre, and performed on the double bass. He was a lively, intelligent, and worthy man. He had great humour and general knowledge; he was particularly fond of pictures, and a good judge of their merit. From some drawings which I have seen, made by himself, I think he would have been a good artist if he had devoted his attention to painting rather than to music. He was a very pleasant and agreeable companion, and calculated to make an affectionate husband.



If Mrs. Billington's connexion with the theatre led her into errors in the earlier part of her life, much allowance ought to be made for the want of a good example in her parents, or rather to the impression of such an example upon a young and active mind.

That Mrs. Billington possessed a kind disposition, I, who knew her early and long, can confidently affirm. Her great talents rendered her an object of envious rivalry, and interested scribblers defamed her character. The man who, by his influence over her mother, obtained all the property of the latter by a real or pretended will in his favour, took possession of that property, and had the revolting indecency to remove it from her lodgings, on the very day of her death: and notwithstanding his affected friendship for the mother, almost immediately after her death, published a scurrilous life of the daughter, recording actions and events which existed only in the invention of disappointed malice and venality.

My father knew this man when he was much respected as an officer in the army, and lived in good society. He went to India, but conducted himself there in such a manner that he was sent home, and in consequence of his dissipated habits degenerated in character, and associated chiefly with those who procured unwary prey for a rapacious money-lender, who left immense wealth at his death. What induced me to suspect that he obtained Mrs. Weichsell's property by means of a forged will, was a circumstance that occurred in the earlier part of his life. He courted a lady of some fortune and great expectations. In order to appear to her a man of property, he sat up the whole of several nights to fabricate fictitious title-deeds, which he submitted to her inspection. By these means she was tempted to marry him, but soon finding that she had forfeited the patronage of her family, and been duped by an adventurer, she threw herself from the window of a second floor, in the vicinity of St. James's, and was killed on the spot. He was a handsome, sprightly man, and retained a military air even in the decline of life.

Bad as his conduct was, I must mention one circumstance to his credit. He had risen from parents in very humble life, and when he was walking one day with some of his brother officers, he saw an old woman at a distance, with a basket on her head; "Ay," said he, "there's my poor old mother; I must go and kiss her." She was really his mother. He ran to her, kissed her, shook her by the hand, gave her money, and then joined his companions. The poor woman was confused on his account, and endeavoured to avoid this act of filial duty and affection.

What became of this man I know not, whether he is dead or sunk into obscurity, but he is a lamentable proof of degeneracy of character, for when my father first knew him, he was esteemed a spirited young man of the most honourable principles, and perhaps at that period would have looked with horror on the possibility of his being guilty of such conduct as he subsequently practised respecting the property of Mrs. Billington's mother, and still more on the idea of extorting money from the daughter by a libel on her life.

On the day when the work appeared, Mr. Billington purchased a copy as the ground for a prosecution. In the evening I called on his wife, to endeavour to sooth her feelings under such a virulent and venal calumny. I advised her to let the slander drop into obscurity. The husband and wife adopted my advice, and the work fell by its own malice, hardly affording the venomous calumniator, I will not degrade the name of author by applying it to him, the expense of his worthless publication.

It is not necessary to trace Mrs. Billington's progress in her profession. She first distinguished herself as a vocal performer of the highest class in Dublin; and her fame spreading widely, she was offered liberal terms by my late friend Mr. Harris, senior, the principal proprietor of Covent Garden theatre, and appeared there in the year 1781. The play on that night was ordered by his majesty George the Third. She displayed such powers on that occasion as may be said to have established her fame, and secured her independence. She was soon after engaged for all the chief concerts in the metropolis, and for all the country music-meetings, and at length received such inviting offers from Italy as induced her to visit that country.

Mr. Billington died at Naples. I lost in him a worthy and agreeable man, with talents which I doubt not would have enabled him to make a respectable figure in any other profession; and if her merits had been confined to private life, I am persuaded they were likely to have been a happy couple, but she was unfortunately, by her beautiful person and great musical powers, exposed to the dangers of admiration, flattery, and influence of the gay world.

Mrs. Billington, on her return to this country after the death of her first husband, continued in the most perfect harmony with his relations; and when his younger brother, an artist of great merit died, she attended his funeral on a very rainy day, and exposed herself in the church-yard, though so much depended on her voice. I was one of the mourners, and witnessed the sincerity of her grief on the melancholy occasion.

She was unfortunately married again to a Frenchman who had some connexion with Bonaparte's army, but, not living happily together, they parted, and she returned to this country, where she exerted her talents with equal splendour and success. She acquired a large fortune, and lived with liberal hospitality, allowing her husband a suitable provision. She frequently gave splendid concerts and entertainments at her large and elegant mansion near Hammer-smith. At length, after her husband had borne a separation from her of about sixteen years, he signified that he could not subdue his affection for her, and desired her to rejoin him abroad. Many of her friends earnestly entreated her not to return to a man from whom she had so long separated, and whose only motive for requiring a reunion was, most probably, to obtain possession of the fortune which she had acquired. I wrote with the same view, and in her answer



she says, "He is my husband, and I know my duty." I retain her letter.

I have been told that she held him in terror, and that it is probable she returned to him because she knew the power of a husband, and was afraid of inducing him to exert it. She returned to him, and I never heard from her again. There were strange reports respecting the cause of her death; but as her brother, Mr. Weichsell, was on the spot, or near it, when she died, and does not give countenance to these reports, it may be concluded that they are not well founded.

On her death her husband returned to this country, and demanded her property from her trustee, Mr. Savory, her firm and zealous friend; and as there was no opposing claim, I understood from Mr. Savory that he paid him to the amount of about 40,000*l*.

On returning from one of her visits to Italy, her fame was so great that Mr. Hill, the proprietor of "The Monthly Mirror," requested I would give him a sketch of her life. I applied to her for that purpose, and in her answer, after mentioning the particulars of her family, she concludes with saying, "For God's sake do not make me more than thirty." This circumstance ought to have been introduced before. Such was the fate of Mrs. Billington, for whom I had a warm and pure friendship, and whom I shall always remember with sincere affection. She was beautiful in person, amiable in disposition, and possessed of the highest musical talents and attainments.

Mr. JOHN JOHNSTONE. This gentleman united the qualities of an excellent actor and a very agreeable singer. In the representation of Irish characters, he was much superior to any other actor within my remembrance. Moody was a good actor, but heavy and sluggish, and in the performance of Irish characters his merit was chiefly confined to those of a lower description. But Mr. Johnstone was always active and sprightly, and admirable in representing his countrymen, whether of the higher or lower order, or in any of the intermediate degrees. The Irish of all ranks are known to be arch, witty, and humorous; and Johnstone had fully studied the national character. There was a peculiar spirit in his manner, and he had great penetration. His Foigard was perfect. His Sir Lucius O'Trigger, though of a totally different nature, he performed with equal skill. Sir Callaghan, also was a part in which it was impossible for him to be excelled. But he was not confined to Irish character. Whatever parts required manly spirit, seemed always to have been written originally to draw forth his talents. He was a very lively companion, and had often been honoured by the countenance of his late majesty, and admitted into the royal festive parties. His manner of singing humorous songs was superior to any other performer that I ever witnessed, and if asked for a song, he complied as readily as if he had been asked for information on any current event.

Many a pleasant hour I passed in his company at the hospitable table of our mutual friend Francis Const, Esq., the chairman of the Middlesex sessions. But though Mr. Johnstone was ready for any jovial occasion, he was wisely attentive to the dictates of prudence;

and conscious of the uncertainty of the theatrical profession, the fluctuations of fashion, and the caprices of public taste, he managed the profits of his talents with discretion. While he lived like a gentleman, and often entertained his friends, he avoided all extravagance; and from his entrance into the theatrical community, took warning from those who were careless and insensible to the value of independence, which it was his chief aim to obtain, for the purpose of not depending on the caprice or tyranny of theatrical managers; and that he might enjoy a competence in the decline of life. He was, however, one of those who might be indifferent to the conduct of managers; as he possessed talents that rendered him a prime favourite of the public, and consequently secured him a welcome reception at any theatre.

His figure was tall and manly, his face handsome and expressive, and there was an ease and firmness in his gait, which probably was the effect of his having, in the early part of his life, been in the army. Towards its decline, however, his person was much altered, but his mind retained all its sense of humour and vivacity till his last illness, which ended in his deliverance from all earthly troubles. I have dwelt the longer upon the character of Johnstone, because I thought highly of his intellectual powers, and am persuaded that he would have appeared to advantage in any situation that required attention, discretion, and sagacity.

MR. O'KEEFFE. This gentleman, who is still alive, and who may be considered, *sui generis*, as a dramatic writer, I have long known, and have had the pleasure of writing two or three prologues, at his desire, for some of his dramatic productions. I have letters from him expressive of more thanks than such trifling favours could deserve. He had the misfortune to be blind ever since I knew him, and therefore was not able to take that part in company for which he was well qualified by original wit and humour, and, as I have reason to believe, also by learning.

He had written a play, of which our renowned Alfred was the hero, to which, at his request, I gave a prologue. In this prologue I courted for him, of course, the favour of the public, and signified that they would no doubt be surprised that he who produced "Bowkit," "Lingo," &c. should venture to portray the glorious founder of our laws. This prologue was spoken, but I understood that it did not satisfy Mr. O'Keeffe, who considered himself as equally qualified for the serious and sportive drama. As a proof he was offended that I did not give him credit for a genius for the heroic drama, as well as for the luxuriance of his humour in farce-writing, when a subscription was raised for the publication of his works in four volumes, in order, to purchase an annuity for him, to which I was glad to subscribe though he introduced all the other prologues I wrote for him, he omitted the one in question; yet, if I do not mistake my own humble productions, it is one of the best of the many which I have written.

Mr. O'Keeffe, in his "Reminiscences," mentions having met me. I remember that I met him twice at the table of Mr. Daly, formerly the proprietor and manager of the Dublin theatre, who was a hand-



some man, with a figure well formed for tragedy, and the higher characters of the comic drama. He remained in London some weeks, and I dined in company with him again at Mrs. Billington's. Mr. Daly, according to reports, was irritable and impetuous; but, if such was his temper, it did not appear in company, for while wit, humour, and raillery flew around him, he seemed rather disposed to share in the mirth, even when some of the sportive effusions glanced at himself.

Mr. Daly was the second husband of Miss Barsanti, a lady who distinguished herself in her early life at Covent Garden, by her theatrical powers, and her admirable imitation of French and Italian manners. Her person at that time was tall and slim, and her action spirited, graceful, and elegant. Never did I see such an alteration in person and manners as when I saw her as Mrs. Daly. She had become very bulky, and though amiable and attentive, her manners were plain, and she seemed as if she had been a rustic matron who had never seen the metropolis. Her husband's attention to her seemed to invalidate all the unfavourable reports of the irritability of his nature.

---

## CHAPTER XLIII.

**MICHAEL KELLY.** Though I class Mr. Kelly among theatrical performers, I rank him also as a private friend,—for a more friendly nature I have not known. Though he had no pretensions to literary merit, he did not want good taste, nor was it confined to his musical profession. Allowing for vanity, an essential ingredient in human nature, he possessed humour, and was a pleasant companion. His “Reminiscences,” from which I have derived more amusement than from similar works written with higher claims to literary notice, represent his character faithfully, and prove what I have before said of him, viz. that he was only an enemy to himself. His hospitable turn, resulting from the habits of his country, as well as from his own liberal disposition, prevented his acquiring that independence which otherwise his talents would probably have obtained.

Madame Mara, one of my early and most intimate friends, who was well acquainted with the world, gave me a favourable representation of Mr. Kelly before I knew him. She assured me that he was very good-natured, that he possessed great humour, and was peculiarly successful in imitating foreign manners, particularly those of foreign musical performers and composers. I had never any reason to think that Mara had been mistaken in his character.

He first appeared at Drury-lane theatre in the opera of “Lionel and Clarissa,” in which he performed the part of Lionel. I did not admire his singing, and his acting was such an odd mixture of foreign

manners and accents, supported by the native pronunciation of his country, Ireland, that, being connected with a public journal at the time, I did not wish to bring my humble judgment in question, or to say any thing injurious to a young man who came to London with high musical fame, and of whose private character I had heard a good report. I was the more disposed to decline criticising his performance, on account of Messrs. Sheridan and Richardson, proprietors of Drury-lane theatre, with whom I was intimate, and who expected much advantage from his talents. I therefore requested Mr. Richardson to give an account of Kelly's first appearance; the interest which he took in the theatre, as well as his own benignant temper, induced him readily to undertake the task, and his report was highly favourable. Kelly then, from his intimacy with Stephen Storace, a musical composer of great merit, and with the kind aid of Mr. Cobb, the dramatic author, had songs and characters provided for him, which brought him forward, and enabled him to become a favourite with the public.

Kelly was ambitious of high and literary connexions, and his cheerful disposition and amusing talents forwarded his pretensions. By his own account in his two published volumes, he must have been patronised, and admitted to a familiar intercourse with many of the most distinguished characters in Europe, in point of rank as well as talents. Few persons, indeed, seem to have enjoyed a more happy life, or to have passed through the world with a less offensive, or indeed a more conciliating temper.

He has fallen into some mistakes in his biographical work, but they are all of a trifling nature, and hardly worth notice. In his first volume, he gives an account of what befell a countryman of his own, according to the report of a Venetian. The Irishman had unguardedly thrown out some reflections on the Venetian government, having suffered by a theft; the Venetian, therefore, advised Kelly to keep a "*silent tongue*," lest he should be involved in similar danger. I have a similar story to relate on indisputable authority, and I may therefore presume that similar events have happened under the same vigilant and formerly rigorous government.

The fact which I am going to mention I derived from Mr. Roma, a native Venetian, who assured me that he was on the spot at the time. An Austrian prince, passing through the streets of Venice, was struck by an embroidered piece of stuff in one of the shops, and ordered one of his attendants to buy and bring it home with him. The man did so, but it was pillaged from him as he passed. When he informed his master of the loss, the prince said that he thought the Venetian government was too vigilant for such a theft to take place. Within an hour after, the Austrian prince was summoned to a legal tribunal then sitting. He was introduced into a darkened room, where sat three judges in black attire. He was formally asked to tell his name, his rank, and his motive for visiting Venice. Having answered these questions, he was then asked with the most awful solemnity, if he had ever uttered any reflections on the Venetian



state. The prince was so bewildered with the scene before him, and the terrific aspect and manners of the judges, that he was unable to recollect till he was reminded of his loss, when he attempted to stammer out an apology for what he had uttered on the occasion. He was then told that he was excused, as a foreigner, but that he should have a proof of the vigilance and justice of the Venetian government. Folding doors were then opened into a very light room, and the thief was seen hanging with the embroidered stuff under his arm. As soon as the prince was released from this terrific tribunal, he took his departure immediately from Venice, and did not stop on his journey till he was out of the reach of its government.

Mr. Kelly's connexion with Mrs. Crouch brought him more forward in the eyes of the public. I knew her first when she was about fifteen years of age, and she was one of the most beautiful young women I ever saw. Her person pointed her out as destined for an appearance in public life, and she was studying music at the time. I passed an evening with her at the house of her father in Gray's Inn lane. He was a solicitor, but had been in the mercantile sea-service before he entered the profession of the law. It was impossible for me to be in company with so beautiful a young woman and not pay particular attention to her; but her father kept a rigid eye upon her, and looked displeased when any thing was addressed to her in the way of compliment. I remember that she sang "My Lodging is on the cold Ground," a popular song at that time, with so much sweetness, feeling, and expression, that I augured highly in favour of her success in public life. Her progress on the stage as an actress as well as a singer, fully justified my anticipation. I retained my friendship with her till her death, and had many opportunities of supporting her talents through the medium of the public press, of which I always availed myself.

I was once highly mortified in learning that she thought I had severely commented on her acting in a morning paper. The circumstance was as follows: I met Kelly one morning, and, after the customary greeting, I asked after Mrs. Crouch. His manner of answering seemed a little mysterious, and induced me to desire an explanation. "Why, to tell you the truth," said he, "she is much offended with you, as she hears you have mentioned her harshly in a newspaper." Finding that she was at home, I hastened instantly to the place. There was a gloomy expression in her countenance, which was increased when I said, "Mrs. Crouch, I have a crow to pluck with you." Conceiving herself to be the aggrieved party, "With me?" said she, indignantly. "Yes," said I, "for supposing it possible that I, who had known you from your youth, and was a friend to your family as well as to yourself, could have written any thing adverse to you, without the least offence on your part. I solemnly assure you that my humble pen has never been employed to your prejudice, but always in your favour." Having known me many years, and having very often experienced proofs

of my friendship in public journals, she readily gave credit to what I said, and by her beautiful smiles amply compensated for her previous adverse glances.

I was not satisfied with this vindication of myself, but, as she performed in the evening, I sent a letter to her in the green-room the same night, in which I repeated my assurance that she had been misinformed, and declared that the person who had given the false information was "a liar and a scoundrel;" desiring her to disclose the contents of my letter to any other person who might have heard of the accusation. She was, of course, fully satisfied.

I soon discovered the malignant source of this falsehood. A man of talents as an artist, but who had an unfortunate itch for scribbling, was a voluntary contributor to a public print with which I was connected, but in the management of which I had no concern; and he frequently employed his pen in the most venomous effusions of his spleen without provocation. He was the author of this attack on Mrs. Crouch, and, hearing that it excited great attention among the theatrical community, and was considered as an act of wanton malevolence, he became apprehensive of detection, as he was known to write for the paper in question, and therefore hinted to Mrs. Crouch that I wrote the theatrical articles in that paper, insidiously leaving her to conclude I was the author.

Having previously had reason to believe that he had attempted to shift other articles of a similar kind upon me, I was soon confirmed in my suspicion, and resolved at once to put an end to the connexion, though I had been in habits of intimacy with him many years, and always had a full reliance on his friendship. I therefore wrote to him immediately, accused him of his perfidy with respect to Mrs. Crouch, and mentioned other victims of his malice, to whom he had excused himself by attempting to throw the odium upon me. Instead of denying the charge, he demanded my authority, and as I could not betray confidence, I contented myself with silent contempt for the present; but as we were connected with a wide circle of mutual acquaintance, and the dissolution of our friendship excited much attention, I revenged myself by writing a character of him in doggerel verse, of which I never gave a copy, but read it to everybody who called on me for the purpose of hearing it. I soon found that his character was better known to his acquaintance in general than it had been to me, and that they all admitted it to be an accurate portrait. Many solicited a copy, but I never gave one, on account of his family.

We had belonged to an evening club, from which I withdrew, as it was not unlikely that very unpleasant feelings might have arisen had we both been subsequently present at the same time; not that any violence was to be apprehended on his part, for he was a very timid man, and a great deal of his time was passed in making explanations and apologies to his friends for some *mistake* into which he had fallen from misrepresentation: He once made a caricature of Mr. Kemble, in which Mr. Sheridan was represented as holding



Kemble's head *in terrorem*, to frighten people from the theatre,—a design as absurd as malignant, since it was evidently Mr. Sheridan's object to allure them. Hearing that Mr. Kemble was likely to resent such an insult, this insidious and perfidious man requested me to call upon him, and assure him that he had no hand in the caricature, but that it was done by some zealous friend of his, who thought that Mr. Kemble had insulted him, by desiring him not to remain behind the scenes on a busy night when there was hardly room for the performers to move.

This was, indeed, the foundation of the attack on Mr. Kemble, by the man himself, and not by any zealous friend. I delivered his message to Mr. Kemble, whose answer was, "Well, Taylor, if the man chooses to tell a lie, I may as well put an end to the matter by affecting to believe him." He had been introduced on the occasion alluded to behind the scenes by Mr. John Bannister, with whom he was very intimate, and Mr. Kemble, then manager of Drury-lane theatre, seeing him there, observed that the admission of strangers interfered with the business of the stage, and requested that he would retire. This act of duty and necessity on the part of the manager excited the resentment of the visiter, and induced him to resort to the pitiful revenge which I have mentioned.

Fully to illustrate the character of this vain and envious man, he had reported that Mr. John Bannister, on an application for pecuniary assistance from his father, had refused to assist him with a loan of five guineas, unless he would leave his watch as a security for repayment; and he therefore called Mr. Bannister, junior, the "little pawnbroker," though he was on terms of friendship with him at the same time. This malignant fabrication reached the ear of young Bannister; and as I was returning to town very early one summer morning, just as I entered Piccadilly from Hyde Park, I was saluted from a hackney-coach, in which I found Mr. Bannister, junior, and my old friend Harry Angelo, who has recently published his amusing "Reminiscences." I soon learned that they were on their way to call on the man whom I have been describing, in order to make him apologize to Mr. Bannister for the opprobrious falsehood which the latter had invented against him. I reasoned with them on the impropriety of disturbing a man with his family, probably before he had risen; and Bannister agreed to return, provided I would go with them and read my character of the man to our friend Rowlandson, the celebrated artist, who had not heard it. As I never gave a copy of this character, and as the subject heard of it from many quarters, I felt, perhaps, a blameable gratification in conceiving that he probably supposed it to be much more severe than it was possible for me to have made it.

But I have forgotten my friend Michael Kelly all this while. In the second volume of his "Reminiscences," he relates an anecdote respecting Mr. Sheridan, which he said he derived from the late Mr. William Woodfall, but, as he does not state it correctly, I shall mention it as I heard it, more than once, from Mr. Woodfall himself, who

was my particular friend, and on whose veracity as well as memory I could perfectly rely.

It is well known that Mr. Sheridan was engaged in a duel with a Captain Matthews, with whom he had previously been on friendly terms, attended with peculiar circumstances of mutual animosity, and even of desperation. A letter on this subject, containing severe reflections on Mr. Sheridan, appeared in "The Bath Chronicle," or some other Bath journal. In consequence of this letter, Mr. Sheridan waited upon Mr. W. Woodfall, then the proprietor and conductor of "The Morning Chronicle," of which he was the founder, and requested that Mr. Woodfall would copy the letter from the Bath paper into his own journal. Mr. Woodfall expressed his surprise that Mr. Sheridan should wish to give a wider circulation to so bitter an attack on him. "That is the very reason," said Mr. Sheridan; "for as I can refute every part of that letter, I wish the attack and the answer to be spread over the kingdom, instead of being confined to a provincial paper." Mr. Sheridan added, that on the day after the letter appeared in "The Morning Chronicle" he would bring the refutation. Accordingly the letter was published in "The Morning Chronicle," but Mr. Sheridan, though applied to for the refutation, never wrote a syllable on the subject, and from mere negligence or contempt thus disseminated a calumny against himself.

Mr. Woodfall said, that when people came to him with complaints against Mr. Sheridan for inattention, he used to relate this anecdote to them, and ask how they could expect more attention from one who was so negligent in matters that so nearly affected his own reputation. Such is the fact as I heard it from Mr. Woodfall.

The only part of Mr. Kelly's work which I read with regret was a passage which related to Mr. Richardson. I will cite the passage. "Mr. Richardson was a good man, and one of my most intimate friends; but, like his great prototype and bosom friend, was indolence personified, and *to-morrow*, as with Sheridan, was his day of business. He even seemed ambitious of imitating the foibles of Sheridan, which was bad taste, considering the disparity of their talents; for as the Spanish poet Garcia observes, 'the eagle may gaze steadfastly at the sun, while the butterfly is dazzled by the light of a taper,' not but that Richardson possessed considerable literary talent."

This passage naturally offended Mr. Richardson's three surviving daughters, very amiable and accomplished women. I knew Mr. Richardson from his first leaving St. John's College, Cambridge, till his death, and can affirm that what Mr. Kelly styles "indolence personified" was a fondness for study, reading, and reflection, and a reluctance, except upon absolute necessity, to leave his family, consisting of his wife, a remarkably intelligent woman, and four amiable daughters, one of whom died some years after his death.

Mr. Richardson did not speak in the House of Commons, because he knew that his Northumberland accent might expose him to ridicule; as he had a high sense of personal dignity, for I will not call it pride. But his literary exertions in support of the Fox party, his



comedy of "The Fugitive," his share in "The Rolliads and Probationary Odes," and other exertions of his pen, of which Mr. Kelly could know nothing, should have exempted him from a charge of extreme indolence. But besides that I cannot perceive the applicability of the quotation from the Spanish poet, I must say Mr. Kelly was totally incapable of forming a due estimate of the powers of Mr. Richardson, who was the favourite and chief confidential friend of Mr. Sheridan, a person certainly much better qualified to decide upon Mr. Richardson's intellectual faculties and attainments than Mr. Kelly.

Mr. Kelly mentions a baker who was the moderator at the celebrated Robin Society, which was held in Butcher-row, St. Clement's. He says that his name was Tarcombe, but I understood from my father that it was Jacocks, and, as well as I can recollect, I saw it over his door at his shop near the west end of Monmouth-street. I once saw this person, who was one of the most dignified men I ever beheld. He was a tall and a large man of a very grave aspect. He was, I understood, remarkably skilful in summing up the debates at the speaking-club above mentioned, and in weighing and commenting on the arguments of the several speakers. Some of the first characters of the country were frequenters of this club; and the great Lord Chesterfield declared, that he considered Jacocks as fully qualified to be a prime minister. Such a man, therefore, deserves a better record than I can give to his memory.

I cannot take a final leave of my friend Michael Kelly without expressing my sincere regret that his harmless and pleasant life should have passed during some years before his death in so lamentable a state, from the effects of the gout, as to render him wholly unable to move without assistance; yet when once seated at a convivial table, as I have seen him at that of the late Dr. Kitchiner, his vivacity never deserted him, and he was ready to entertain the company by his good-humour, his anecdotes, and his musical talents.

It should be mentioned, in justice to Mr. Kelly, that he retained the most affectionate remembrance of Mrs. Crouch till his last moments; and knowing that I had been acquainted with her long before she appeared in public, he seemed to feel a melancholy pleasure in imparting his feelings to me. I knew her father and brother. The former held a situation in the Castle at Dublin; the latter, a very handsome man and an excellent singer, was a major in the British army.

Michael Kelly was so much in favour with his late majesty George the Fourth, that he annually received from that lamented monarch 100*l.* as a contribution to his benefit. If Kelly "was not witty in himself," his facetious blunders were "the cause of wit in others;" but his temper was so good, that he never was offended at the liberties taken with him, but attempted to retort their raillery, and generally gave fresh occasion for more sportive sallies on his ludicrous mistakes. There were latent seeds of judgment in his mind, derived from long and varied experience in several countries; and amid all his humours and eccentricities, his opinion might be safely consulted in matters of importance.

On one occasion, when Mr. John Kemble was grave and silent, after many persons had expressed their sentiments on a particular subject, and Kemble appeared in dumb solemnity, Kelly turned towards him, and aptly applied the words of Hamlet, "Come, Kemble, 'open thy ponderous and marble jaws,' and give us your opinion."

Mrs. Horrebow, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing many years, is the sister of Mrs. Crouch. She was at Culcutta as an actress, and was acquainted with my brother, who died at that place. When I once dined with her at Mr. Kelly's, she related the following story, which I insert, as it holds forth a proper lesson to pride, affectation, and hypocrisy.

When Mrs. Horrebow returned to this country, there was a gentleman and his niece passengers in the same ship. His name, I think, was Dawson. They intimated to the captain that they did not consider it proper that an actress should be permitted to dine at the same table with them, as the profession of an actress was generally marked by suspicion, if not profligate conduct. The captain opposed this illiberal intimation, and observed that as Mrs. Horrebow was lively, intelligent, agreeable, and polite in her manners, he could not think of excluding her from the table. It appeared that a few days after, one of the passengers had the curiosity to peep through the key-hole of the cabin assigned to the uncle and niece, and there beheld a scene by no means consistent with the relation between them, and the scrupulous delicacy which they had assumed. This curious person disclosed what he saw to the captain, who mentioned it to the other passengers. On the day following at dinner, some of the company, who had supported the cause of Mrs. Horrebow, hinted at the fastidiousness of those who objected to the theatrical profession, and yet were guilty in private life of greater immoralities than were or could be represented on the stage. Other hints of a similar kind were thrown out, and some too direct to be mistaken by the parties to whom they alluded. The gentleman and his niece were evidently disturbed by these pointed references, and suddenly withdrew. Not appearing on the following day when the company assembled at breakfast, a message was sent to them, but, no answer having been returned, it was determined, after a consultation, to have the door broken open. On gaining entrance, a lamentable scene was presented in the dead bodies of the uncle and niece, both of whom had been shot, but the sound of pistols had not been heard during the night, probably owing to the roar of the ocean. A melancholy warning to those who affect to be "righteous over-much."



## CHAPTER XLIV.

GEORGE COOKE, the actor. I knew this person when we were boys together. He was two or three years my senior. He was a heavy-looking lubberly boy, and the last person I should have expected to turn his attention to the stage, particularly to the assumption of heroic characters. A fire happened at Rotherhithe, which was extensively destructive. George Cooke and myself went together to Wandsworth Common, to a lady who resided there, to whom Cooke's mother was distantly related, and to whom a lady intimately connected with my family was also related, and then upon a visit. The lady of the mansion was a spinster, much advanced in years : her name was Dunwell, and she inherited the house in question and the fortune of her cousin, Mr. White, who had been dead some years. He was, I was told, one of the reading clerks to the House of Lords, and, by all accounts, a very amiable and intelligent man. He was known in the higher literary circles of his time, and frequently dined at Lord Oxford's in company with Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, and the usual visitants at his lordship's table.

It was the custom of Mr. White, whenever he returned from any of the dinners at Lord Oxford's or elsewhere, to insert in a book all the anecdotes and remarks which had been made by any of the company ; and he always annexed the name of the person who had related the anecdote or made the remark. The book was nearly full of these memorials. Miss Dunwell died, and left the mansion and her fortune to the lady whom I have mentioned as being upon a visit when Cooke and I went to communicate the melancholy intelligence of the fire which had destroyed the house in Rotherhithe where that lady had resided. The manuscript book was lent to me, and I remember to have read in it most of the anecdotes which I have since found in the posthumous work of Mr. Spence.

As Mr. White was dead, and there was no person in the family of a literary turn, the book was little regarded, and I might, as the phrase is, have "had it for asking ;" but at that time I was insensible of its value.

On the death of Miss Dunwell, as the lady who succeeded to her possessions was a particular friend of my family, and the godmother of one of my brothers, I was in the habit of visiting the house, and remaining there for some days. There was a good library, without any parade of binding, and some excellent Flemish pictures in the drawing-room. The dining-parlour contained portraits of Lord Radnor, Mr. Wilmington, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, friends of Mr. White, as well as a portrait of that gentleman. As far as I can presume to judge of these portraits from recollection, compared with the know-

ledge which I have since derived from long experience in subjects of the fine arts, they were well painted in oil, of the kit-cat size. Those of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick were in crayons, and I afterward saw them in the possession of my father's old friend Mr. Mynors, the surgeon, of Chancery-lane, who has been dead many years, and I know not what became of them: they were painted by Vispre, who put his name to them. They must have been painted in the meridian of the lives of Garrick and his wife, and were admirable likenesses.

George Cooke's mother had a legacy left her by Mrs. Dunwell. Mrs. Cooke was a crazy old woman, and much annoyed the late Rev. Mr. Harpur, one of the executors. Mr. Harpur was one of the officers of the British Museum. Mrs. Cooke frequently called on him, and demanded her legacy, which he could not pay till certain legal forms gave him authority. On one of her visits, the unfortunate state of her mind was too evident, and was attended with melancholy consequences. While Mr. Harpur and his wife were sitting at breakfast, Mrs. Cooke suddenly burst into the room, and in a vehement manner demanded the corpse of her son, accusing Mr. Harpur of having murdered him. Mrs. Harpur was in a very declining state of health at the time, and knowing nothing of Mrs. Cooke, was much shocked at the violence of her manner, and the horrid crime imputed to her husband. Mr. Harpur, who was a very sensible man, with great presence of mind, feeling for the agitation of his wife, quietly told Mrs. Cooke that she had not taken the right course in order to recover the body of her son, and to bring his murderer to justice. "You should go," said he, "to Sir John Fielding's office in Bow-street, accuse me of the murder, and he will send his officers to bring me to justice. I shall then be tried for the crime, and punished if I am found guilty." "Well," said Mrs. Cooke, "I will do so immediately," and quietly departed.

Mr. Harpur took especial care to prevent a repetition of such an outrageous intrusion; but the shock which Mrs. Harpur suffered in her declining state was thought to have hastened her end. I learned this circumstance from Mr. Harpur, with whom I had afterward the pleasure of being well acquainted. He was a remarkably well-bred gentleman, of the Chesterfield school.

The inconsistent and extravagant conduct of George Cooke may, perhaps, be not improperly traced to the mental infirmity of his mother. Very many years had elapsed before I heard any thing more of him than that he had been apprenticed to a printer at Berwick-upon-Tweed. Hearing that a Mr. Cooke had acquired high provincial reputation as an actor, and that he had been a printer, I began to think he might be the person I had known when a boy.

Understanding that he was engaged at Covent Garden theatre, and that he was to rehearse the part of King Richard on a certain morning, I asked my friend the late Mr. Lewis, the great comic actor of his time, and who was then the stage-manager, permission to attend the rehearsal; and he readily consented. It was with difficulty that I could trace the lubberly boy whom I had formerly known, through the



great alteration of his person. At the end of the rehearsal, still doubtful, I addressed him, and asked him if he recollected to have known such a person as myself. He remembered our intercourse, but declared I was so much altered that he should not have known me. I attended his first appearance in the character of Richard the Third, and sat with Mr. Sergeant Shepherd, now Sir Samuel, a gentleman who was held in the highest respect and esteem by his brethren at the bar, which, however, he was obliged to abandon on account of deafness.\* I had the pleasure to find that Mr. Shepherd concurred with me in my opinion of Cooke's theatrical merit. We agreed that he showed a shrewd reflecting mind, but that his manner was rough, coarse, and clumsy. The house was not well attended: he was, however, well received. Mr. Kemble sat with his wife in the front boxes, and was very liberal without being ostentatious in his applause.

Cooke was strong, but coarse. He had not the advantage of much education, but had a shrewd penetrating mind, was well acquainted with human nature, and was powerful in those characters for which his talents were adapted, and they were chiefly of the villanous. He thought of nothing but the indulgence of his passions, particularly devoting himself to the bottle. I found him one night in the green-room during his performance so much affected by liquor, that he was unfit to appear before the audience. He seemed to be melancholy, and when I asked him the cause, he said he had just heard that Mr. Kemble had become a partner in the theatre. "Of course," said he, "I shall be deprived of my characters. There is nobody but Black Jack whom I fear to encounter." I assured him that he mistook Mr. Kemble, who knew his value too well to deprive him of any part. "For his interest," said I, "he would rather bring you more forward. He will revive 'Antony and Cleopatra,' he will be Antony, you Ventidius. He will be Othello, you Pierre; you Richard, he the Prince of Wales; you Shylock, he Bassanio;" and I mentioned other parts in which they might cordially co-operate. These remarks cheered him, and he said, "If so, we will drive the world before us." In the mean time, I plied him with tumblers of water, and lessened the effect of the liquor, recommending forbearance of the bottle. He thanked me, and promised to take my advice, went home, immediately returned to his wine, and was rendered so ill that he was confined to his bed the two following days.

Mr. USHER, the actor. This gentleman was respected for his literary talents, and according to report, was the author of an elegant little tract, entitled "Clio, or a Discourse on Taste," which I remember to have read in early life, and which afforded me pleasure and instruction. It was afterward, I understood, much enlarged, and approved by the critics of the time. He never rose to eminence in his profession, but the parts assigned to him he always supported with

\* Sir Samuel Shepherd's father was a respectable tradesman in Cornhill, and much esteemed by all who knew him.

judgment, and was particularly attentive to *dumb show*, constantly exhibiting by his action a feeling correspondent with that of the interlocution in the scenes in which he appeared. He seemed to be of a very reserved disposition, and, instead of mingling in the green-room with the rest of the performers, always retired to the back of the stage during the intervals of his performance. Hence one of the performers designated him by the title of "The Recluse of the Lake," the name of a novel that had then been recently published; and this title was afterward generally applied to him.

I was acquainted with him, and held him in great respect, though his station on the stage was always of a very subordinate description. I found him modest, attentive, and intelligent. He had a daughter, who was a provincial actress of some repute, but I believe she never made her way to the London boards. I knew her also for a short time while she resided in London, and considered her as a very sensible woman. She was much too unwieldy for the stage when I knew her. I presume that they have long since made their exit from the mortal stage.

Considering Mr. Usher as a literary man, he may be considered as having devised a strange expedient for the improvement of his fortune. He purchased a great number of wheelbarrows, which he let every day to the itinerant daughters of Pomona, who drive these carriages through the streets of London. They were obliged to return these vehicles every night and pay for their hire. What space he had to dispose of these travelling machines on their nocturnal return, I never knew; but, according to report, he lost so many of them by the dishonesty of these fair votaries of the goddess of vegetable luxuries, that he abandoned the scheme as a ruinous speculation.

MR. JOHN PALMER, the actor. This was an extraordinary performer, and the best I have seen in the characters for which he was peculiarly adapted, such as Brush in the "Clandestine Marriage," Brass, or Dick, in "The Confederacy." I have seen him play both admirably. His Henry the Eighth was an excellent performance. He could also support characters of manly sensibility, such as Sydenham in "The Wheel of Fortune," a character which he rendered so prominent, even with Mr. Kemble's Penruddock, that the former character sunk into insignificance on Palmer's death. His "Joseph Surface" was understood to have been written by Mr. Sheridan, as a delineation of Palmer's real character.

Mr. Palmer was certainly not calculated for the higher characters of the drama, but perhaps it would be impossible to excel, or even to rival him in those that were suitable to his talents and qualifications. I once saw him attempt Macbeth, but was much disappointed; and in my opinion, he was equally unsuccessful in Falstaff; though he was by no means deficient in humour, yet it did not rise to a level with that of the facetious knight.

Mr. Palmer was always silent in company, but he compensated by his expressive gestures for his taciturnity. I once dined in company with him at the late Dr. Arnold's. George Colman the younger



was present, and where he is there can be no want of lively sallies. There were other clever men present, and wit and humour abounded. Though Palmer was silent, he was attentive, and his expressions of surprise, admiration, and pleasure, as the repartees flew from each person, enabled him to fill the scene as well, and with as much satisfaction to the company, as if he had been one of the most active speakers.

Having so fine and commanding a person, he was a great favourite of the ladies, and had a high character for gallantry. Being upon familiar terms with him, when I once saw him knock at a door in Great Pulteney-street, I shook my head in order to indicate that I thought he was on some gallant pursuit. Instead of asking what I meant, as a man innocent of the implied suspicion would naturally have done, he said, "I live here;" and when I gave another doubtful shake of the head, he said, "Upon my word, my family are up-stairs;" and he parted with me in good-humour, acknowledging that rumour had given me just grounds for my suspicion.

But comic characters were not the only ones to which he rendered ample justice. He could not, indeed, as I have observed, perform the higher parts of tragedy. His *Macbeth* did not display powers of suitable elevation, but his *Macduff* was very impressive; and on his death Mrs. Siddons, speaking of his merits, said to me, "Where shall we again find a *Villeroy* and a *Stukely*?" He was indeed admirable in both of those characters, particularly in the former, chaste, dignified, and interesting.

**MR. KEAN.** Having given some account of the theatrical performers who have fallen within my notice, beginning with Mr. Garrick, it might reasonably be thought strange if I said nothing of so very conspicuous a character in the theatrical world as Mr. Kean. The truth is, that I never could perceive in him those high professional merits which the public have not only evidently, but most fervently acknowledged. I was unwilling to oppose my humble opinion to the public judgment; and, as a public critic, I deemed it cruelty to attack a man in his profession, even if I could possibly have persuaded myself that my weak censure might do him an injury. Such has been always my rule in writing theatrical critiques, either on performers or dramatic authors.

I saw Mr. Kean on his first performance in London. The part was *Shylock*, and it appeared to me to be a favourable specimen of what might be expected from a provincial performer, but I could not see any of those striking merits which have since appeared to the public; and, finding in his progress that his fame increased without any apparent improvement, in my humble judgment, and, as I before observed, reluctant to oppose public opinion, I avoided, as much as was consistent with the duty of a public journalist, to notice his performances. But I hope I shall not be accused of vanity in saying, that I found my silence in public, and my observations in private, had brought upon me the imputation of being an enemy to Mr. Kean. I should be shocked, indeed, if I felt conscious that I deserved such an imputation. As a

proof, however, that such a suspicion had gained ground, I dined once with my old acquaintance, Mr. Pascoe Grenfell, M. P. at his house in Spring Gardens, when Mr. and Mrs. Kean were of the party, and I heard afterward that Mrs. Kean, a lady by no means unwilling to communicate her sentiments, had expressed her surprise, either to Mr. Grenfell himself, or to one of the company, that Mr. Taylor should be invited to the same table with Mr. Kean. I happened to sit next to Mr. Kean at dinner, and paid him particular attention, to obviate, or soften any displeasing feeling on his part, and endeavoured to enter into conversation with him on dramatic subjects; but, though he conducted himself with politeness, he seemed of a reserved and taciturn habit, yet without the least indication that he thought himself near a person inimical to his fame. I have since seen Mr. Kean in most, if not all, of his theatrical exhibitions, and I can even solemnly declare that I went for the purpose of enlightening my mind by the public judgment, but unfortunately my opinion remained precisely the same; I say unfortunately, for otherwise I should have received from his acting the same pleasure which the public have enjoyed.

Perhaps it may be thought that I am biased by my recollection of Garrick, whom I saw in many of his performances when I was twenty and twenty-one years of age. If so, I cannot but admit the charge, since I am supported by the testimony of the best authors and critics of his time, as well as by the opinion of all his theatrical contemporaries. Far from feeling a prejudice against Mr. Kean, I should have been happy in joining with the million in admiration of his abilities, as he is the grandson of an old and long-esteemed friend of mine, Mr. George Saville Carey. And here let me stop to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of a very worthy man, and a man of real genius.

George Saville Carey was the son of Henry Carey, a very popular dramatic author, but more particularly known for his fertility in song-writing. His "Sally of our Alley" has been long a favourite ballad; he was the author of "Chrononhotonthologos," and other dramas popular at the time; and is mentioned in Dr. Johnson's "Life of Addison" as one of Addison's most intimate friends. His son, my old friend, laboured to prove that his father was the author of the words and music of what has been styled the national anthem, "God save great George our King."

Henry Carey was a musician as well as a dramatic writer, but being, like too many of the literary fraternity, improvident, and careless of the future, he was reduced to despair, and hanged himself on the banister of the stairs where he resided. A single halfpenny was all that was found in his pocket; and it came into the possession of my father's old friend, Mr. Brooke, whom I have before mentioned, and who kept it as a mournful relic of departed friendship.

George Saville Carey, I believe, had no recollection of his unfortunate father, though he cherished his memory, and was well acquainted with his works. The son, it is said, was originally apprenticed to a printer, but he soon adopted the theatrical profession, with however so little success that he became a sort of public orator and



mimic, in which capacity I became acquainted with him early in my life. He was chiefly a mimic of the theatrical performers of that time, but introduced many odd characters in his miscellaneous compositions, which he publicly recited. I remember to have heard him deliver his recitations at Marylebone Gardens, now covered with elegant mansions. Like his father, he was a musical performer, and accompanied himself with skill and taste on the guitar.

As the nature of his profession induced him to lead an itinerant life, I never knew when or where he died, but have reason to fear not in prosperous circumstances. He wrote many songs and other poetical productions; but as he kept them in reserve as instruments of his calling, I only know them as he recited them in public, or to me when he called on me. I only knew of his death when his daughter, whom I understood to be the mother of Mr. Kean, called on me to sell some musical productions of her deceased father; and on more than one occasion that child accompanied her who was destined to become the most popular and attractive actor of his day.

I have introduced these circumstances, merely to show that I had more reason to be the friend of Mr. Kean than to be adverse to his talents.

I will venture to say a few words respecting Mr. Kean as an actor. He had the sagacity to perceive that there were many points and passages in dramatic characters which performers in general passed negligently over in their endeavours to support the whole of the part, but which admitted of strong expression. These points and passages Mr. Kean seized upon, and brought forth, sometimes with archness, and often with a fiery emotion which made a strong impression on the audience, and essentially contributed to his extraordinary success. That he performs with great energy must be readily admitted, and it is to be hoped that he will inoculate some of his professional brethren with the same fervour.

Here I conclude my observations on Mr. Kean, heartily rejoicing at his prosperity, as he is the grandson of my old friend, and as he is well known to be a liberal-minded man, and ready to manifest a generous zeal to assist any of the theatrical community who fall into distress.

It may be mentioned among the extraordinary vicissitudes of life, that when the late Mr. John Kemble, in his almost idolatrous admiration of Shakspeare, during his management of Drury-lane theatre, performed Macbeth, he introduced the children according to a passage in the play as spirits—

Black spirits and white,  
Red spirits and gray,  
Mingle, mingle, mingle,  
You that mingle may.

Mr. Kean figured as one of those spirits, and was afterward destined to perform the royal usurper himself on those very boards, and to draw popularity from that other great tragedian. Mr. Kemble did

not consider that his own grave taste might on such an occasion differ from that of the majority of the audience, to whom the comic capering of the infantile band had a most ludicrous appearance, as, indeed, happened to be the case.

At this time Mr. Kean, being weak in his legs, was obliged to have them supported by iron props. My friend George Colman the younger, having seen the boy in this situation, and to whose ready wit and humour I, as well as most of his friends, have often been a victim, said, "Oh! I remember the child, and I called his legs Fetter-lane sausages."

In the same spirit of Shakspearian idolatry, Mr. Kemble, at Covent Garden theatre, had the table in the banquet scene in "As You like It," supported by horns instead of wooden-legs, though in a forest, wood might have been deemed more convenient and sylvan-like in its appearance. But who can blame his enthusiastic admiration of the greatest dramatic poet that the world ever knew, and whose chief characters afforded him scope for the exertion of his talents, and the attainment of his high and well-merited professional reputation?

MR. BARRYMORE. This actor, whose real name was Bluett, which he abandoned for one that he thought was more acceptable to the public, was never a great, but yet a respectable performer in the middle sphere of comedy or tragedy. He was the first Pizarro in Mr. Sheridan's translated and improved play of that name.

Mr. Barrymore had a good person, above the middle stature. He had always a just conception of the part which he assumed, and performed with great spirit, and sometimes perhaps with too much, in the extreme ardour of his feelings.

I remember a ludicrous instance which shows the humour of Mr. Sheridan. Mr. Barrymore performed the part of Blondell, in the musical afterpiece of "Richard Cœur de Lion," and displayed such an excess of animation, that Mr. Sheridan whimsically observed, that Blondell seemed to be as much surprised to find he was Blondell, as the rest of the dramatic characters were to hail him as the friend of the captive monarch. This idea pleased Sheridan so much that he ran about the green-room while Barrymore was on the stage, exclaiming in imitation, "I find I'm Bloudell—I'm really Blondell—Egad, I'm Blondell. How strange! I'm Blondell." When Barrymore returned to the green-room, and heard what had occurred, he was much displeased, but Sheridan's winning manners soon coaxed him into good-humour.

Mr. Barrymore assured me that he often went dinnerless into the passages of Drury-lane theatre, to secure a place at an early hour when Garrick performed; and he dwelt with animation on the excellence of that incomparable actor. Mr. Barrymore had for some time been unemployed, but was restored to the stage by Mr. John Kemble, during his management of Covent Garden theatre, and he always spoke of Mr. Kemble's kindness with fervent gratitude.



## CHAPTER XLV.

MR. BENSLEY. It may be thought that the same reason which might have prevented Mr. Quick from venturing on the stage, would have operated on this gentleman, viz., the peculiarity of his voice, the tones of which were grave and often nasal; but he possessed a good education and a sound understanding. He was originally an officer in the marines, and was present at the taking of the Havana. He had not only a peculiarity in his voice, but a wild habit of rolling his eyes, and a formal stiffness in his deportment; but his good sense and gentlemanly manners triumphed over all his defects, and rendered him a deserving favourite of the public.

The stiffness of his gesture, the solemnity of his manner, and his peculiar tones, all operated in his favour in the part of Malvolio; and, perhaps, it may be fairly said, that he could not be excelled in that character; but, in my opinion, his Mosca, in "The Fox," was the part in which he chiefly shone. He was peculiarly qualified for grave, sententious, and moral characters. He was spirited in Pierre, and sufficiently subtle and impressive in Iago. His Prospero was a grave and dignified performance.

Before he ventured on the stage, Bensley was the intimate friend of Churchill, the elder Colman, Lloyd, and Wilkes, a proof that his intellectual powers and attainments were not of the common order. In his latter days he was very intimate with the late Lord Torrington and Mr. Windham, the latter of whom induced him to retire from the stage, and procured for him the situation of barrack-master; the profits of which, with his wife's fortune, and his own prudence in the management of his theatrical income, enabled him to receive his friends, and to live like a gentleman, a character which he uniformly maintained in private life. It is lamentable to record, that towards the decline of his days his mental faculties decayed, and precluded him from society, and even from domestic intercourse, but did not disturb the serenity of his temper. A rich relation, of the same name, left him, according to report, about 50,000*l.*; but this great acquisition, which ought to have been rendered beneficial to him at an earlier period, when it was probably wanted, did not disturb the placidity of his nature.

His wife, a very amiable lady, survived him many years, and I wrote a tribute to his memory, for which she sent her thanks to me as an acknowledgment of the truth of my humble memorial. His connexion with this lady was somewhat romantic. Seeing her in danger of falling from a restive horse at Bristol, he rushed forward, like an adventurous knight-errant, and rescued her from peril. This accident produced an acquaintance, which was followed by a marriage.

I think his intellectual malady must have appeared in some degree before it became the object of much notice, for I remember to have seen him standing in the north piazza of Covent Garden, staring for some time earnestly at the church clock. It was just at the time when Mr. Kean seemed to be the wonder of the town, and by some silly bigots was said to excel Garrick. I accosted him, and in a brief conversation said, "I thought Garrick was the greatest actor the world ever saw." "Who ever thought otherwise?" said he, and abruptly departed, contrary to the gentlemanly courtesy which had marked his whole life.

THE ELDER BANNISTER. This actor was one of my early acquaintances, and a more manly character I never knew. He was born with a powerful frame, a strong constitution, and vigorous passions. His voice was powerful, but he was capable of singing pathetic airs. He had a good understanding, and was quick at repartee. Some of his *bon-mots* would have been widely circulated and recorded if they had come from a character in higher life. His errors were the effects of his passions, and these were the progeny of his vigorous constitution. His social disposition led him into habits of dissipation and pecuniary embarrassments, by which the mind is too often led into errors, particularly when a convivial turn is accompanied by the companionable qualities of wit and humour; but I am persuaded that he never contracted a debt that he did not intend most honourably to discharge, relying on his talents and reputation for a certainty of engagements.

I have seen him in his sober and in his festive moments. In the former, with a disposition to jocularly, he was always gentlemanly in his manners; and when under the influence of a social glass, the same disposition prevailed, and as far as my observation of his character enabled me to judge, he was never in the slightest degree inclined to be quarrelsome, but rather to indulge more in wagery.

That he was an affectionate father I have no doubt, and I doubt not also he found an affectionate son in all his difficulties; thanks to the filial regard and prudent wisdom of the latter. It is gratifying to me to recollect that, whenever he met me, he said, "I am always glad to meet you, as you are a friend of Jack's." And so I was, and I should have been very ungrateful if I had been otherwise, for I have often derived pleasure from his son's public talents, as well as from his hereditary wit and good-humour in private life.

Charles Bannister was an excellent mimic, and as far as a natural timidity would permit him, a very good actor; for, manly as his character was, I have been assured that he felt an awe of the public eye, which he never could entirely overcome, and that when he was to appear in a new character, he walked upon the stage in great agitation before the curtain was drawn up, and could not subdue this emotion even in parts most familiar to him. He was more likely to injure himself by misplaced confidence, than to injure anybody by meanness or dishonour. What he might have been in any other station or profession it is not, in my opinion, difficult to say, for I am



sure a manly spirit would have been predominant, and generosity, as well as wit and humour, would have rendered him as conspicuous as his situation would allow. His Caliban, in the opinion of my friend Gifford, a much better judge than myself, was the most perfect assumption of character that he had ever witnessed on the stage. But, in reality, Charles Bannister was born for good-humour and conviviality—

To doff the world, and bid it pass.

With all his careless excesses, he was always designated, by those who best knew him, by the name of "Honest Charles Bannister,"—a designation to which I heartily subscribe, when I reflect upon his intrinsic character, and what affluence would have made him.

**MR. ROBERT PALMER.** This actor was very well calculated to follow his brother John in impudent footmen, and all characters of that description, but by no means in the higher order of comedy. He was excellent in rustic characters, and in the representation of inebriety. He was a very good-natured fellow, and was generally styled "Bob Palmer." Though well acquainted with the town, and all its careless, if not dissipated characters, there was a simplicity in his nature that was somewhat extraordinary. At present I remember one instance. Happening to meet him one morning when I had seen a paragraph in the newspaper, stating that a Mr. M.'s brother had eloped with his wife, I asked him to whom the article alluded, and having told me the name of the injured party, he added, "If a brother of mine had served me so, d—n me if I would ever speak to him again!"

Honest Bob had the usual ambition among actors to appear in characters for which nature had not designed him, such as grave and sententious moralists; and he once announced "an attempt to perform Falstaff," which, indeed, was *an attempt*.

**MR. JOHN QUICK.** I have already mentioned this gentleman, but may nevertheless be allowed to say something more of a most excellent actor and a very worthy man, with whom I have been intimate many years, and with whose talents I have often been gratified. Mr. Quick is still alive, and by his social qualities and abundant good-humour is able to delight those friends with whom he associates in his quiet retreat at Islington. I have not had the pleasure of seeing him for many years, but in passing by his house within the last three, I called on him twice, and was both times disappointed.

Mr. Quick's understanding, talents, and knowledge of life would have qualified him for the highest characters of the drama, though comedy was his proper sphere of action, if nature had given to him a person and voice suitable to the heroic province. There is hardly any species of character in the comic drama which he did not personate with critical precision, as well as with exuberant humour, except, perhaps, the parts of youthful gallants, in what is styled genteel comedy. Yet he could well assume characters of rank, such as

ancient splenetic barons, where pride and arrogance were essential; but in middle and lower life his humour was always appropriate and irresistible in effect. He never gave offence by indulging a luxuriance of gayety, but was always strictly adherent to his part, except in such diverting decorations as were in exact correspondence with it, and such as the author might expect in an actor to give animation to his own design. In all Shakspeare's clowns he fully executed the conception of his great author, and said "no more than was set down for him." His Dogberry may be said to have been as perfect a personation as any ever represented, even by Garrick. His affected pity at the ignorance of Verges, while he glaringly exposes his own, made the audience always regret that the scene was not longer. His voice was so peculiar, that it seems strange it did not originally deter him from thinking of a theatrical life: but he managed it so well as always to render it natural and correspondent with the part which he represented. His Tony Lumpkin was perfect in rustic bluntness and humour, nor was he less effective in Justice Woodcock. His misers were admirable and finished portraits. He was no less admirable in Touchstone, exhibiting a perfect conception of the character, and illustrating it by his own original waggery.

On one occasion, when he was performing the part of Justice Woodcock, and Mrs. Billington that of Rosetta, the song in which she says, "I'll reward you with a kiss," and gives one to the justice, was encored; and as he was of course gratified by a repetition of the same favour, he came forward and bowed gratefully to the audience, who were highly entertained by this prompt testimony of good-humour. He liberally allowed the talents of his competitors.

I remember once asking his opinion of Shuter, whom I regret to say that I do not sufficiently recollect as an actor, considering my opportunities. He spoke of Shuter's talents with the warmest panegyric, and concluded with saying that he was "*all honey*."

Here I may properly quit the theatrical qualifications of my old friend, and refer to his private character. He was, and I doubt not is, the same respectable member of society that he always has been, a good husband and father. His daughter is married to Mr. Davenport, a teacher of languages, and the author of two valuable dictionaries, one Italian and English and the other Spanish and English. He resides in Doctors' Commons, and, before his advanced age disabled him, Mr. Quick, since his retirement, used every day to walk from Islington to see his daughter, and indulge the feelings of an affectionate father.

MRS. BEMBRIDGE. In the early part of my life I became acquainted with a widow of this name. She was the mother of Mr. Bembridge, who held a good situation in the Army Pay Office for many years, but was dismissed during the time that Mr. Burke was paymaster, contrary to Mr. Burke's efforts to retain him in his post. Mrs. Bembridge was much advanced in years, but retained good bodily health and a perfect possession of her intellectual powers. I was always fond of associating with old persons, from whom I ex-



pected to derive knowledge; and as I listened with pleasure to this lady, she took much notice of me. Her connexions had been of a high order. I understood from her that it was the custom in her early days for gentlemen to take their female friends with them to their tavern dinners; and she told me, that upon an occasion of this nature she was present when Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, Prior, and other distinguished wits were of the company; she was introduced by a near relation, being anxious to witness such a scene.

Soon after dinner a message was delivered to Prior, who suddenly rose and was leaving the room. Pope asked him in a low tone the cause of his quitting the company; and he answered softly that he had received a message from Chloe, who had been arrested, and that he was going to release her. Whether he returned to the company I know not, or have forgotten.

Many accounts have been given of this memorable Chloe, the favourite of one of our best poets; but, according to Mrs. Bembridge, who professed to have authentic information, she was the wife of a barber in Long Acre, who had by no means a delicate sense of conjugal purity, and thought he was honoured by Prior's *patronage* of his wife, though probably not indifferent to a more convenient compensation.

Mrs. Bembridge informed me that at a later period she had a house at Twickenham, so near to that of Pope's that their gardens were close to each other. She had no intercourse with her neighbour, but was one day surprised by a note from Mr. Pope, importing that, with her consent, he would have the pleasure of taking tea with her. She of course signified that she should be proud of the honour of receiving him. He came, and desired to take a walk in her garden. The lady accompanied him, and, as he was attracted by some object, he advanced a few steps before her, but suddenly turned and said, "Madam, I beg ten thousand pardons, you had a shocking prospect before you," obviously alluding to the deformity of his person. "Ah, Master Taylor," said the old lady, "it was then I felt my deficiency; I wanted to say something about the honour of having a visiter of his genius and fame, but I could only blush and look foolish."

Mrs. Bembridge described Mr. Pope as having been very talkative at the tavern dinner mentioned before; but that Lord Bolingbroke was reserved, though attentive to all that passed, and at times cast around him such penetrating glances as were calculated to excite awe wherever they were directed. Mrs. Bembridge must have been a very handsome woman, judging from the interesting remains of her person when I knew her.

Dr. Monsey told me, that in paying a visit one morning to a nobleman, whose name I do not remember, as he was chatting and standing by the fire, a little man, who was sitting near, made such shrewd comments on what passed as he was unable to answer, and that he soon after left the room, wondering who this mean-looking clever man could be; upon inquiring of the porter, when he quitted the house, Monsey was told that it was Mr. Pope. The doctor said he

was ready to bite his tongue off for having taken leave, as he had been anxious to get into company with the great poet, but never saw him after. As the doctor was so free in his manners with persons of all ranks, it was very strange that he did not invent some excuse to return to the room, as he was one of Pope's warmest admirers, and very often quoted from his works.

Mrs. Bembridge was an intimate friend of Mr. White, reading clerk to the House of Lords. I had read a manuscript book written by Mr. White, in which he had made minutes of all he had heard at the tables of Lord Bolingbroke, the Earl of Oxford, and other great houses. Among the articles in that book was the following story as related by Mr. Pope.

Shakspeare, after his retirement from the stage, used, on his visits to London and also on his return, to rest at the Crown at Oxford, the chief inn in that city, then kept by Mr. Davenant. This landlord had a son to whom Shakspeare was godfather, and who was therefore christened William. Mrs. Davenant was a very handsome woman, and it was surmised that Shakspeare was more than a godfather to the boy. Billy Davenant was always sent for from school when Shakspeare arrived, and one day when the boy was running home he was met by a head of one of the colleges, and asked where he was going in such haste. The boy said, "I am going to my godfather, Shakspeare."—"What!" said the gentleman, "have they not yet taught you not to take *the Lord's name in vain*?"—in which he was supposed to allude to the rumour against Mrs. Davenant's conjugal fidelity.

Such is the story as I copied it from the manuscript, and many years ago communicated to the world through the medium of the public press. I have since discovered that my father's old friend Mr. Oldys relates the same story in his manuscript, as having also received it from Pope at Lord Oxford's table, and states that it was a townsman of Oxford, not the head of a college, who addressed the boy; but the answer, in my opinion, is more pointed in Mr. White's account of the story, and more suitable to a scholar than a townsman.

Mr. Steevens's disbelief and contempt of this story is truly ridiculous, viz. that from Sir William Davenant's "heavy, vulgar, unmeaning face," he could not be Shakspeare's son: as if nature was always consistent in transmitting beauty and deformity. But surely Mr. Steevens might have traced some lineaments of Shakspeare's mind in Sir William, who was shrewd, intelligent, and a good poet; and whose son seemed to carry on the intellectual features, as he was a scholar, and published several learned works. Yet for the honour of Mrs. Davenant's character it would be liberal to distrust the story, though not upon the same grounds as the absurd skepticism of Mr. Steevens.

There is another story respecting Shakspeare, which I have read, but know not where, and which I may mention because every thing that relates to our great dramatic bard must have some interest



attached to it. It is said that Burbage, the chief actor in Shakspeare's time, had made an assignation with a lady of a tolerating disposition; that he was to call on her when he had performed his part at the theatre; and that when he knocked at the door and she answered him from the window, his signal was to be, "I am Richard the Third," the part which he had previously performed. Shakspeare, according to the story, overheard the appointment, and determined to forestall Burbage; and as either gallant was equally acceptable to the lady, Shakspeare was well received. When Burbage came and knocked at the door, Shakspeare looked out of the window instead of the lady, and in answer to Burbage's signal, "I am Richard the Third," said, "But I am William the Conqueror, and he was the first." It is not unlikely that this story might have furnished a hint to Otway for his lamentable incident in "The Orphan."

There was another curious anecdote in the same manuscript book, which I copied and gave to the public prints many years ago. It stated, that on the night after the decollation of King Charles the First, his body was placed in a room at Whitehall, and that the Earl of Southampton sat in the room to guard and manifest his respect for the royal corpse. About midnight the door opened, and a person entered so muffled that he could not be known, who, after slowly walking to the coffin, looked at the corpse some time, and having exclaimed, "Cruel necessity!" as slowly retired. Lord Southampton said he could not discover the person, but thought from his figure and voice that it might be Oliver Cromwell.

Having mentioned these anecdotes to my late friend Mr. Malone in a letter, he favoured me with the following answers, which I submit to the reader, as they afford additional proof of the indefatigable zeal with which he pursued all subjects that he took in hand, and of the judgment and acuteness with which he treated them.

Mr. Malone was quite a gentleman in his manners, and rather of a mild disposition, except when he had to support the truth, and then there were such firmness and spirit in what he said, as could hardly be expected from one so meek and courteous; but he never departed from politeness and respect. The following is Mr. Malone's answer to the first of these anecdotes:

"TO JOHN TAYLOR ESQ.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"An unusual press of business has prevented me from thanking you for your notices concerning Davenant's being the supposed son of Shakspeare. But you are in an error in supposing that the story which you mention is not noticed in my edition: it occurs there twice; once from the papers of Oldys, who says he had it from Pope at Lord Oxford's table (see vol. i. part i. page 158, and additional anecdotes, Warton's long note, &c.), and again the fact is alluded to in vol. i. part ii. page 270. It also occurs, under different names, in Taylor the Water Poet's Jests. Oldys having got hold of the story, I could not give it well from myself, but shall give it in form in my

new edition, with some new additional evidence. By the way, you see how stories gather as they run; for, according to your relater it was a grave head of a house who asked the boy this question, and made the sly observation on Davenant's answer; but Oldys, with more probability, says, that the questioner was a townsman of Oxford. Then again, we are told that Shakspeare went to London every second year, whereas, unquestionably, as long as he was connected with the stage, he went every year.

"I am, dear sir, with many thanks,

"Most faithfully yours,

"E. MALONE.

"Foley Place, September 12, 1810."

"TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The anecdote you mentioned (as derived from Pope), of a man skulking into the chamber at Whitehall, on the night when the body of the murdered Charles was laid there, is told also by Spence, in his anecdotes, from the same authority. But it is good for nothing: the perfidious Cromwell had no such feelings. Read the trial of the regicides, and you will there find that when he saw Charles landed at Sir R. Cotton's garden, and he was sure they had *caught* him, he turned as white as a sheet; and just after, he and Harry Martin and others entered into a consultation how to destroy him; and they agreed that the best preparation for that work would be to *blacken* him enough. Besides, Mr. Herbert, to whom the care of the body was consigned, has left memoirs, and having minutely noticed every little circumstance, and doubtless sat up with the body, he would hardly have omitted such a circumstance as this.

"I have quite forgot what you told me concerning Johnson's prologue to Goldsmith's play. Pray be so good as to send it to me. The life will very soon go into the press.

"Yours, dear sir, faithfully,

"E. MALONE

"Foley Place, Oct. 13, 1810."

To the zeal, judgment, and accuracy of Mr. Malone, the world is indebted for a valuable account of the English stage, and for many interesting particulars respecting the works, life, and family of Shakspeare. It is not unlikely, that the story importing that Sir William Davenant was supposed to be the son of Shakspeare, which I derived from the manuscript book written by Mr. White, is the most correct, for Mr. White immediately wrote all the anecdotes that he heard at Lord Oxford's table, and Oldys having so many literary works in hand, might not exactly recollect it. According to Aubrey's account, as published by Wood, Sir William was contented to be thought the son of Shakspeare, no great compliment to the memory of his mother. That the report had some foundation is obvious, since it was mentioned by Taylor, the Water Poet, and probably by others at the



time. At all events, whatever relates to Shakspeare must be interesting.

As to the anecdote respecting the supposed visit of Cromwell to the body of King Charles, it is strange that Mr. White should have mentioned Lord Southampton as sitting up with the body, and not Mr. Herbert. But, perhaps, they both performed that melancholy duty, and during an occasional absence of Mr. Herbert, the muffled man might have entered as described, and he therefore did not notice what he had not himself seen. Admitting that Cromwell was the mysterious visiter, the fact was perfectly consistent with the hypocrisy of his character, and a natural desire, even in such a character, to acquire some reputation for humanity.

It is somewhat strange that Mr. Malone should not have noticed Mr. White's statement, that Lord Southampton was the person who attended the body of the murdered monarch, as there can be no doubt that it was so represented by Pope in the hearing of Mr. White, who did not mention the name of Mr. Herbert. Why must the story be untrue? And why must Cromwell have turned as white as a sheet *because* he had *caught* the king? Turning white is not the indication of joy. Granting the fact, may it not rather be inferred that Cromwell was confused by the sudden arrival of the king, and apprehensive that the people might rise in support of their persecuted monarch, and the rebels be finally disappointed, particularly as they deemed it necessary to blacken his character in order to prepare the minds of the people for the dreadful catastrophe which they had in view? This appears to me to be a more probable solution of Cromwell's paleness than that it resulted from the pleasure of getting the unfortunate monarch into his power. Upon the subject of the rebellion and the regicides, it has always appeared to me that Clarendon wrote from his feelings rather than from his reflections on the conduct of the conspirators after the melancholy event had occurred. Yet I reproach myself with temerity in venturing to differ from so judicious and venerable an authority.

Recurring to the subject of Shakspeare, a subject that must be ever interesting to those who are proud of their country, I will venture to hazard a conjecture. It is well known that there is a traditional story, importing that Queen Elizabeth, pleased with Falstaff, desired the author to prolong the character, and represent him in love, and that, in consequence of this request, he wrote "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*." But that seems to be an erroneous conception, for Shakspeare has not invested him with the noble and disinterested passion of love, but has made him a mercenary profligate, and a pander, totally contrary to the supposed wish of the queen. If it be true that Elizabeth expressed a desire to Shakspeare that he would write any play, it appears to me that the play in question must have been "*Henry the Eighth*;" for whatever her filial affection and reverence might be, she must have been convinced, that the tyranny and turbulence of her father's character were not likely to receive a favourable report in the record of history, and might therefore wish

that the great poet would soften his character, and transmit him to posterity, through the medium of the drama, with a princely dignity, and a temper blunt but not brutal. It is not possible that Shakspeare would have presumed to introduce the character of her father, and have brought forward the play, without full authority, and a direct request, if not a positive command.

Shakspeare has wonderfully succeeded in drawing the character of Henry, giving a favourable colouring to his tyranny, cruelty, and caprice, and such as must have satisfied Elizabeth; and this conjecture places her in the light of an affectionate and respectful daughter. This supposition, in my humble opinion, gives probability and strength to the traditional story of her having desired Shakspeare to write a play, but not that in which there is no conformity to her supposed requisition. Dr. Kendrick seems to have adopted the mistaken tradition, and to have been tolerably successful in giving the facetious and licentious old knight a more honourable passion in his ingenious comedy of "Falstaff's Wedding."

---

## CHAPTER XLVI.

MR. RICHARD CUMBERLAND. What I remember of this gentleman was both disagreeable and pleasing. When he was not touched with jealousy of other writers, his manners were highly gratifying. He was full of anecdotes, but sometimes his memory failed, and little reliance could be placed on the accuracy of his narrations. He had a great command of language, and has left full evidence of his having been a good scholar, as well as a sagacious critic. His observations on "The Fatal Dowry" of Massinger, compared with "The Fair Penitent" of Rowe, which my friend Gifford has introduced in his admirable edition of "Massinger's Plays, are ingenious and profound; but it is by no means improbable, that if Rowe had been as distant from him in point of time, and Massinger as near to his period as Rowe, he would have found good reasons for preferring "The Fair Penitent," and his arguments have been as strong in favour of the latter.

The first time that I was in company with Mr. Cumberland was at the chaplain's table in St. James's Palace. Among the party was Dr. or Mr. Jackson, one of his majesty's chaplains. Jackson, whose character resembled that of Mr. Cumberland in veneration for the higher ranks, began with asking how Lord Edward Bentinck was, that nobleman having married a daughter of Mr. Cumberland. Mr. Cumberland expatiated upon the health of his lordship, and nothing was heard but about his lordship for some time, his lordship's title adorning every inquiry, and closing every answer. At length, when his lordship had sufficiently wearied the company, Lady Edward was



introduced in turn, and engrossed nearly as much of the conversation as his lordship, with as much repetition of her ladyship's title.

When these subjects were exhausted, it became Mr. Cumberland's turn to inquire; and as Jackson was patronised by the Duke of Leeds, Mr. Cumberland, of course, thought it his duty to inquire after his grace. His grace then was echoed over the table as frequently as had been his lordship and her ladyship. At length the conversation became general; but some contemporary dramatic author having been mentioned with commendation, Mr. Cumberland began to express his surprise that so favourable an account had been given of a writer so little entitled to notice, much less to praise. The gentleman who had commended the author in question attempted modestly to support his opinion. Mr. Cumberland became heated, and spoke in so irritable a manner that the gentleman thought proper to drop the subject.

Dr. Taylor, chaplain to his majesty, and Jackson's coadjutor, was at the dinner, with the Rev. Mr. Penneck. Mr. Nicol, the venerable bookseller to his majesty, and myself, after the dinner, adjourned for tea to the house of Mr. Nicol in Pall Mall; and I remember that Mr. Nicol, after a liberal compliment to the talents and attainments of Mr. Cumberland, concluded, in reference to the want of temper which he had shown at the table, with observing, that he was "a man without a skin."

Jackson was generally known by the designation of *Con.* Jackson, an abridgement of *consequential*, on account of the affected dignity of his deportment, and the manner in which he larded his conversation with the names of his noble connexions. My late friend Sir James Bland, who omitted his former name of Burgess, wrote a very humorous tale respecting this Dr. Jackson, entitled "*The Bishop's Wig*," founded on a report that the doctor had ordered a wig in expectation that he should obtain a mitre through the influence of his patron the Duke of Leeds. Sir James had written many other humorous productions of the same description, and I was not a little gratified when, referring to my tale of "*Monsieur Tonson*," he addressed me once in company, and sportively said, "Ah! Taylor, nobody can write tales but you and I."

Mr. Cumberland certainly displayed his critical acumen when he was the means of introducing Mr. Dowton to the London stage, one of the best comic actors within my remembrance. It is with much reluctance that I have given this unfavourable account of a gentleman whom I cannot but admire as a scholar and an author; but though I could relate other anecdotes of the same kind, I shall take leave of him with one anecdote that was told me by my early and most intimate friend the late Mr. Richardson, author of the comedy entitled "*The Fugitive*," and one of the writers of "*The Rolliad and the Probationary Odes*."

Mr. Cumberland came one night to Mr. Sheridan's box in the theatre somewhat late, and stumbled at the entrance. Mr. Sheridan sprang forward and assisted him. "Ah! sir," said Cumberland,

"you are the only man to assist a *falling* author. Mr. Sheridan, in waggery or forgetfulness, said, "*Rising*, you mean," the very words which Mr. Sheridan has assigned to Sir Fretful Plagiary, in "*The Critic*," a character commonly understood to be drawn for Mr. Cumberland.

The name of MR. RICHARDSON will not suffer me to proceed to any other subject, till I have paid a tribute of sincere respect and regard to his memory. I became acquainted with him just after he quitted St. John's College, Cambridge. He was at that time a remarkably fine showy young man. I was struck by his admirable understanding and the peculiar force and elegance of his language, which appeared to me to have all the energy without the pomp of Johnson, with the terseness and spirit of Junius. As he was a total stranger in London, and had no college connexions in town, we soon became very intimate, and our friendship, with a short intermission, lasted till the end of his life. My admiration of his talents increased in proportion as I became better acquainted with him, and I had never any reason to alter my opinion of his intellectual powers. His short history, as I understood from one of his earliest friends, was as follows.

He was born at Hexham, in Northumberland, in 1755, and was the son of a respectable tradesman in that town. The father not being able to give him a university education, a titled lady in the neighbourhood, hearing of the promising talents of the young man, offered to send him to college, and to support him till he obtained a degree, signifying that he would probably make his way in life without requiring any farther assistance from her. After he had been a few years at college the lady married, and then informed him that her husband did not think it proper that she should any longer support a fine young man, lest she should give occasion to the gossiping suspicions of a slanderous world. As Mr. Richardson did not choose to become a burthen upon his parents, he thought proper to quit his college, and to try his fortune upon the world at large. A gentleman whom he had known at Cambridge, and who was connected with "*The Morning Post*" newspaper, a few years after its origin, procured for him the situation of a literary contributor to that paper, and afterward furnished him with the means of becoming one of its proprietors.

It is much to be regretted, that it is impossible to collect his various effusions in prose and verse, during his connexion with that paper, as they would doubtless have constituted a lasting monument of his genius, learning, and taste.

In due time Mr. Richardson's talents became known to a large circle of friends, in which were included Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Tickel, Lord John Townshend, Lord Fitzwilliam, the late Duke of Portland, and the late Duke of Northumberland. The last nobleman enabled him to become representative in parliament for Newport in Cornwall.

He was called to the bar in the year 1784. Being of a modest



and delicate temper, though he possessed great powers of language, and was a profound logician, the "wrangling bar" was not suited to his disposition; and to the same cause must be ascribed his indifference to reputation as a speaker in parliament. Yet I am assured upon good authority, that in two or three contested elections for country boroughs, he distinguished himself as a counsel by the shrewdness of his examinations and the force of his eloquence, though somewhat impeded by a provincial accent, which he never could sufficiently conquer; and this circumstance also doubtless deterred him from appearing as an advocate in the London courts of law. At length, becoming the chief confidential friend of Mr. Sheridan, he was induced to relinquish the bar altogether, and to turn his attention to the drama.

In the year 1792, his comedy of "The Fugitive" was brought forward at the King's Theatre,\* in the Haymarket, and received with very great applause. The prologue was written by the late General Burgoyne, and the epilogue by Mr. Tickel. Mr. Richardson did not think proper to attend the performance himself, but his friend Tickel, who was present, undertook the office of transmitting to him, at the end of every act, an account of the manner in which it was received by the audience; and the very favourable reception which it experienced was, of course, highly gratifying to the distinguished friends of the author, as well as to himself and his family.

This comedy is written with admirable spirit. It can hardly be considered as an exaggeration of its merit, when it is said that the scene between Old Manly and Admiral Cleveland is not unworthy of the genius of Congreve. It was supported in the representation by the first performers of the theatre, all of whom felt pleasure in testifying their respect for the author.

During the progress of the comedy, Mr. King, who performed the part of the admiral, having been taken ill, the late Mr. Kemble, who was then the manager, undertook the part, and displayed great judgment and more comic humour than was thought to be within the compass of his theatrical powers. By the profits of this comedy, and the assistance of some of the higher order of his friends, Richardson was able to purchase from Mr. Sheridan a fourth part of the theatre. The fame which he acquired by this comedy considerably extended the circle of his acquaintance; but, however tempted by invitations from his elevated connexions, nothing could induce him to neglect the society of his family; and as I was the most intimate of his private friends, and was always admitted, I am indebted to this domestic intercourse for many of the happiest days that I was ever destined to enjoy.

I cannot deny myself the pride of stating, that after he had communed with his wife, who was a very sensible and intelligent critic, I was the first friend whom he consulted on the subject of his play,

\* Drury-lane theatre was then rebuilding, and the theatrical company had removed to the Italian Opera-house.

and I retain the letter which he wrote to me on the occasion from Broadstairs, whither he had retired for the purpose of giving it a final revision. The manuscript was transmitted to me. I read it with the zeal and caution of a friend, and returned it with a sincere tribute of approbation, to the best of my judgment.

As I wrote an account of Mr. Richardson in "The Monthly Mirror," a periodical work of well-merited repute, by desire of the proprietor, during the life of Mr. Richardson, and the biographical sketch which appears in the collection of his works, by desire of his widow, I need not prolong the subject in this place.

For some years I generally dined with Mr. Richardson on New Year's day, and the only persons invited besides myself were Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Shield, the musician. On the last of these occasions, my present wife was one of the party; and a pleasant day we enjoyed, not without a feeling of regret on observing the evident decline in the health of our worthy host. On this occasion, Mr. Sheridan, from memory, recited the verses descriptive of some of his political connexions, which my friend Mr. Moore has introduced in his life of that great ornament of English literature.

When the first wife of Mr. Sheridan died at Clifton, Mr. Richardson accompanied him, and witnessed the real tenderness and affection with which he soothed and endeavoured to console her in her last moments, and the grief which he felt when death deprived him of so amiable and accomplished a partner. Mr. Tickel, when he was deprived of his wife, was also attended by Mr. Richardson on a similar mournful occasion. Mrs. Tickel was the beloved sister of the former lady, who, though not so attractive in person as Mrs. Sheridan, resembled her strongly in mental powers, accomplishments, and disposition. Mr. Tickel, in the agonies of sudden grief, intended to have a tombstone raised at the place, and signified his resolution to inscribe it with his declared determination never to engage in wedlock again, but to continue during life wedded only to her remains. Mr. Richardson, who well knew the character of Mr. Tickel, persuaded him to defer this affectionate tribute to a future period, alleging that if the tribute to her memory were immediately to be inscribed on the tombstone, it might be considered as only the effusion of temporary grief; but that if it were delayed for a twelve-month, or a more distant time, it then would naturally be deemed the result of a settled conviction of her virtues, and a proof of his continued and durable affection. Mr. Tickel assented to this discerning counsel of his friend, and a year or two afterward entered into a second marriage.

Mr. Richardson continued to decline in health, and at length died on the 9th of June, 1803, in the forty-seventh year of his age, though, from the original vigour of his constitution, he might have been expected to live to a green old age. This melancholy event took place at Virginia Water, near Egham, and he was buried in the churchyard of that town. His funeral was attended by Mr. Sheridan, by his old and constant friend Mr. Richard Wilson, by the late Dr. Coombe,



the physician, and myself. As an extraordinary circumstance occurred on this occasion, it may not be improper to relate it.

The funeral ceremony was to take place at one o'clock in the day, but we did not reach the ground till a quarter after, and were surprised and grieved to find that the funeral rites had been performed. Mr. Sheridan was particularly affected, and traversed the churchyard in great anxiety. He said to me as we walked together, "Now this disappointment will be imputed to me, and it will be said in town by all our mutual friends, that it was owing to Sheridan's d—d negligence, which he could not shake off, even to pay respect to the remains of his dearest friend." During this interval of anxiety, the clergyman who had performed the ceremony entered the churchyard. I left Mr. Sheridan, and inquired of the reverend gentleman what was the cause of this hasty interment, as greater latitude ought to have been allowed to friends who had to come twenty miles to attend on the mournful occasion, and who had arrived within a quarter of an hour after. The clergyman said it was owing to the undertaker, who alleged that he had another funeral to attend at a distant place. I then asked the clergyman if the ceremony could properly be repeated, as we were all bitterly disappointed that we were prevented from testifying our grief by partaking in the last offices of respect to the remains of a valued friend. The clergyman seemed to pause, and as I knew that my interference could be little likely to affect him, I hastened to Mr. Sheridan, and told him there was a possibility that the ceremony might be repeated. Mr. Sheridan then ran to the clergyman, telling him who he was, and earnestly entreating, if there were no impropriety in the measure, that the ceremony might again take place to satisfy the feelings of himself and his friends. The clergyman said that he was only the curate to his father, the vicar, and could not without authority comply, but would consult his father, and if he consented, return immediately, properly attired to repeat the ceremony. In a few moments he appeared dressed for the occasion. We then adjourned to the church, in which the funeral service was partly performed, and the remainder at the side of the grave, without removal of the coffin.

It is difficult to describe the sort of mournful exultation with which Mr. Sheridan said he could now venture to face his friends in London, conscious that he had not failed in any respect to do honour to his departed friend. We dined at Bedford on our return to town, and Mr. Sheridan entered into a eulogium on his deceased friend, of whom he spoke with sincere emotion and affecting eloquence. Mr. Sheridan and myself were set down at the end of Bond-street, in Piccadilly, and I accompanied him to his house in George-street, Hanover-square, now occupied by my friend Dr. Pearson. As soon as we entered Conduit-street, he manifested great emotion, and in the agony of his feelings struck his head against the door of the nearest house, exclaiming that he had lost his dearest friend, and there was now nobody who could enter into his domestic cares and be a confidential agent, when occasion might require, between himself and

Mrs. Sheridan. I endeavoured to sooth his feelings, and on parting with him at his own door, he designated me as "Joe Richardson's Legacy."

I have been the more particular in stating these, I trust not uninteresting facts, as they relate to two persons whose intellectual powers were of so high an order, and whose friendship, like that of Damon and Pythias, deserves to be recorded; and also because my friend Mr. Moore, in his "Life of Sheridan," has not correctly recollected what I related to him on the occasion, when I had the pleasure of dining with him at Messrs. Longman and Co.'s for that purpose. I shall cite the whole passage, because it seems to reflect on the memory of Mr. Sheridan; nor shall I, with affected modesty, omit that part which relates to myself, for who would not be proud of praise from Mr. Moore? I have only to regret that I do not deserve it.

"The death of Joseph Richardson, which took place in this year (1803), was felt as strongly by Sheridan as any thing *can* be felt by those who, in the whirl of worldly pursuits, revolve too rapidly round self to let any thing rest long upon their surface. With a fidelity to his old habits of unpunctuality, at which the shade of Richardson might have smiled, he arrived too late at Bagshot (Egham) for the funeral of his friend, but succeeded in persuading the good-natured clergyman to perform the ceremony over again. Mr. John Taylor, a gentleman whose love of good-fellowship and wit has made him the welcome associate of some of the brightest men of his day, was one of the assistants at this singular scene, and also joined in the party at the inn at Bedfont afterward, where Sheridan, it is said, drained the 'cup of memory' to his friend, till he found oblivion at the bottom."

In justice to the memory of Mr. Sheridan, it is proper to state, that when we called to take him up at his house, on going to the funeral, he came to the door, and apologized for not going with us, as he said he was first obliged to wait on the Duke of Bedford, but that he would overtake us on the road. I who, as Mr. Moore says, well knew his "old habits," shook my head in doubt. Mr. Sheridan then said, "No—honour bright (a customary expression with him), you may depend on my overtaking you on the road; and so he did at Turnham Green, where he quitted his own carriage and entered ours; and though at our return to Bedfont he certainly drank to the memory of his friend, it was to no unseemly excess.

In some degree to relieve this grave recital, I cannot help stating that in going, when we changed horses at Hounslow, Mr. Sheridan said he would walk over the heath, as he enjoyed but little exercise. In proportion as the coach followed him, he quickened his pace, and at last, to prolong his exercise, he began to run; and never did I see a more ludicrous sight than his figure, almost double, exhibited, while he continued to hasten his speed till the coach overtook him.

The scene in the churchyard would have been diverting also on a less melancholy occasion; for in our hurry to attend the melancholy



ceremony, not knowing it had already been performed, we put on the mourning cloaks without regard to their size, so that Mr. Sheridan had one that hardly reached to his knees, and Dr. Coombe, a very short man, had one so long that he trampled upon it, and nearly tumbled at every step. Naturally conversing on the subject of our departed friend in the coach as we returned, Mr. Sheridan expressed his determination to write an epitaph on Mr. Richardson; and Dr. Coombe, who professed particular knowledge of stones, declared that he would select a durable one for the inscription. The epitaph, however, was never written, and the stone was never found.\*

After the death of Mr. Richardson I seldom saw Mr. Sheridan, and the last time I had the pleasure of being in company with him was at a tavern in Portugal-street, adjoining Clare market. I had been dining with my old friend Jessé Foot on the anniversary of his birthday, and Mr. Sheridan having learned at my residence where I dined, sent a message to me about ten o'clock at night, importing that he wished to see me on particular business, at the said tavern. I rather offended my friend Foot by leaving him, but alleged the probability that Mr. Sheridan might really want me, and I was permitted to depart. I naturally expected to find Mr. Sheridan alone, or with some confidential friend, but found the table surrounded by jovial spirits, who seemed determined to celebrate their orgies till a late hour. Mr. Richard Wilson was one of the party. His cellar adjoining his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields being conveniently near, and the tavern wine not being of the best order, Mr. Wilson abundantly supplied all that was wanted, and there was a call upon his bins till five in the morning, when the company separated; Mr. Sheridan having been in remarkably good spirits, and more than usually inclined to colloquial exertion.

I remember that speaking of a person who had published a pamphlet against him, he said in the course of the night, "I suppose that Mr. ——— thinks I am angry with him, but he is mistaken, for I never harbour resentment. If his punishment depended on me, I would show him that the dignity of my mind was superior to all vindictive feelings. Far should I be from wishing to inflict a capital punishment upon him, grounded on his attack upon me; but yet on account of his general character and conduct, and a warning to others, I would merely order him to be publicly whipped three times; to be placed in the pillory four times, to be confined in prison seven years, and then, as he would enjoy freedom the more after so long a confinement, I would have him transported for life."

The remainder of the sitting passed with jollity, without any allusion to politics, and though Mr. Sheridan took the lead in wit and humour, yet he diffused a cheerful contagion round the rest of the company, and many sallies of merriment burst from other members of the party, who were previously known for talents and festivity.

Mr. Sheridan, unhappily, was not reputed to be the most prompt

\* Mr. Richardson left a widow and four daughters. The mother and youngest daughter are dead, and I attended them to the grave. J

and punctual of paymasters. He was indebted to Mr. Shaw, the leader of the band at Drury-lane theatre. Mr. Shaw, though a friendly, good-natured man, tired with frequent applications without success, called on me, and said he wished to submit a statement of his situation and his correspondence with Mr. Sheridan to the public, observing that as it related to so conspicuous a character, it would attract much attention to any newspaper that contained it. He said that therefore he gave me the preference, requesting it might appear in "The Sun." He was highly incensed, and it was with great difficulty I persuaded him to let me write to Mr. Sheridan on the subject, and endeavour to procure an amicable arrangement, observing that, if he could not succeed in his application, and the statement were published, he was not likely to be more successful after the matter appeared in print; and that I should despise myself if I endeavoured to draw attention to my newspaper by exposing the differences of friends. At length he assented, and I wrote to Mr. Sheridan, who in his answer, which I have retained, desired me to appoint a meeting at my office between him and Mr. Shaw on the following Saturday. I accordingly wrote to Mr. Shaw for that purpose. Mr. Sheridan punctually attended at the appointed time, and I explained to him that any advantage which my paper might derive from the publication could have no weight with me when his interest was concerned. His answer was so gratifying to me that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of mentioning it. "Oh," said he, "when *you* do an unkind thing, chaos is come again!" Mr. Shaw, perhaps conscious of the persuasive powers of Mr. Sheridan, or unwilling to appear as an enemy before one with whom he had long been in friendship, did not attend the meeting, but came soon after Mr. Sheridan, who had waited two hours, left the place, desiring me to appoint a meeting with Mr. Shaw for the following Tuesday. On this occasion the latter attended, but Mr. Sheridan did not. He however sent Mr. Graham, a friend, to meet Mr. Shaw, and request him to accompany him to Sheridan's house, where the latter waited for him. These gentlemen went away together, and matters were settled, as I afterward understood from Mr. Shaw, who told me that he had been able to obtain by my intercession 400*l.* of his money.

At a subsequent period Mr. Shaw applied to me again, in hopes that I might succeed upon a similar occasion. I immediately wrote to Mr. Sheridan, but heard no more of the matter, and therefore infer that a similar arrangement took place. Mr. Shaw, I understood, was brought into difficulty by accepting bills for a perfidious friend, and retired to France, where he still lives, and most probably is able to support himself by his musical talents, and is doubtless esteemed for his manly character and social disposition. As a proof of Mr. Shaw's friendly feelings, knowing that I was very fond of one of Vanhall's concertos, he never saw me at the theatre without selecting that piece for the next performance in the orchestra between the acts; and as I constantly expected it, I always remained to profit by his kindness.

The last time I ever saw Mr. Sheridan I overtook him in Oxford-street, leaning on his servant's arm. I joined him, and he dismissed



his servant on a message, leaning on me till we reached the top of Bond-street. In the course of our walk I told him, that if he would accompany me to the place where I was then going, he would make an amiable and enlightened family happy. He asked me to whom I was going, and I told him I was to pass the evening at Mr. Shee's. Mr. Sheridan expressed his regret that some friends were to dine with him at his house in Saville-row: "But tell Mr. Shee," said he, "that I am unluckily engaged, and add, that I esteem him as a friend, honour him as a poet, and love him as a countryman."

---

## CHAPTER XLVII.

THE late Dr. Bain, a truly amiable man and an acute and experienced physician, of whose friendship I was proud, and whose memory I revere, attended the last days of Mr. Sheridan, and when the sheriff's officers were sent by some unrelenting creditors to take Mr. Sheridan into custody, prohibited them from exercising their inhuman purpose on pain of being indicted for murder, as such an outrage in his present situation would certainly kill him, and they would only have his dead body to remove. The men were not so barbarous as to persevere, but retired. The doctor gave me an account of the last moments of Mr. Sheridan, and said that for a day or two before his death he was either too weak for utterance, or not disposed to make such an exertion. The doctor told him that the Bishop of London was in the house, and asked him if he would permit his lordship to repeat a short prayer by his bedside. Mr. Sheridan did not speak, but bowed assent. The bishop and the doctor then knelt by the bedside, when the former repeated a prayer, but the fervour of devotion rendered it much longer than the doctor expected. Mr. Sheridan appeared to be attentive during the whole. He closed his hands in the attitude of prayer, and bowed his head at every emphatic passage.

A few days previous to Mr. Sheridan's death the late Mr. Taylor Vaughan came to the house, and addressing Dr. Bain, told him, as it was probable that Mr. Sheridan did not abound in money, he was commissioned to present him a draft upon Coutts's for 200*l.*, adding that more was at his service if required. The doctor said, that as he did not observe any appearance of want in the house, he could not take it without consulting Mrs. Sheridan. The lady, on hearing of this unexpected liberality, assured the doctor that she was fully sensible of the kindness of the donor, but must decline the intended donation, adding, that whatever the doctor might order for the relief of Mr. Sheridan should be fully supplied. The draft was then returned. It was understood that the draft was sent by his late majesty, who had graciously inquired into the state of Mr. Sheridan, and was distinguished among the very few who were not indifferent to the fate of an old friend in his extremity.

It would be unjust to Lord Holland and Mr. Rogers, the admired poet, if it were not mentioned that they visited Mr. Sheridan during his last illness, and that on the application of the latter to Mr. Rogers, that gentleman sent to him a draft for 150*l.* in addition to previous pecuniary proofs of friendship. Lord Holland, however, insisted on paying half of that sum. As Mr. Moore has stated, on the funeral of Mr. Sheridan,

The splendid sorrows that adorned his hearse,

it is not necessary to add any thing upon that subject in this place.

When the reports of Mr. Sheridan's illness became very alarming, a letter appeared in "The Morning Post," drawing the attention of Mr. Sheridan's friends to his melancholy situation, without mentioning his name, but designating him in such terms as left no doubt to whom it related. The writer, citing the line above mentioned, concludes with the following passage: "I say *life* and *succour* against Westminster Abbey and a funeral." The letter was anonymous, but it is proper to state that it was written by Mr. Denis O'Bryen, a gentleman whose liberality generally exceeded his means, who was then not upon the most amicable terms with Mr. Sheridan, but who, as Mr. Moore says, "forgot every other feeling in a generous pity for his fate, and in honest indignation against those who now deserted him."

Mr. O'Bryen was favoured by the friendship of Mr. Canning, and I have had the pleasure of meeting that gentleman at the house of the former.

Mr. Sheridan, with all his great intellectual powers, was at times disposed to indulge in boyish waggery; and Mr. Richardson told me, that passing over Westminster bridge with him, he had much difficulty in preventing him from tilting into the Thames a board covered with images, which an Italian had rested on the balustrades. Mr. Richardson had witnessed some playful exertions of this nature. He did so merely to excite surprise and fear in the owners, for he always amply indemnified them for any injury they might suffer.

Upon one occasion, when a nobleman, who had heard much of the talents of Mr. Richardson, had desired Mr. Sheridan to invite him to the country seat, where the latter was then on a visit, and had received a letter stating that Mr. Richardson was unable to come, Mr. Sheridan kept up the expectation of the master of the house, and left the room pretending that he was going to write a letter. Having seen a good-looking man in the house, a visitor to the servants, Mr. Sheridan procured a suit of clothes belonging to the master of the house, had the man dressed in them, availed himself of the noise of a carriage, and formally introduced him as Mr. Richardson to the noble host. Mr. Sheridan had previously tutored the man not to speak, but to bow when any thing was addressed to him. The company were struck with the rustic manner of the supposed Mr. Richardson, but thought that his conversation would amply compen-



sate for any awkwardness in his deportment. The noble host was particularly attentive to his new guest, but, after many vain attempts to draw answers from him, he went to Sheridan, and expressing his disappointment, observed, that if Mr. Richardson had not so high a reputation, he should have thought he was a very stupid fellow, and had never been used to good company. Sheridan said, "Wait till you see him at supper, when the wine has warmed him, and then you will find that he fully deserves all the fame which his talents have excited." The nobleman, however, induced others of the party to address the pseudo-Richardson, and all endeavoured, with the same ill-success, to draw forth his powers. They all therefore agreed in considering Mr. Richardson as one of the dullest men they had ever met with, and in astonishment that so discerning a judge as Mr. Sheridan should be such a bigot to friendship. At length supper was announced, and the company were less prepared to enjoy the luxuries of the table than to witness the brilliant sallies of Mr. Richardson. Sheridan, however, thought that he had carried the joke far enough, and having contrived to get the countryman away, revealed his whimsical expedient, and by his own pleasantry atoned for the retirement of the rustic Richardson.

Another time, when he had engaged Charles Fox, Tickel, and Richardson, to take a late dinner with him at Putney, in a house lent to him, I believe, by the father of the late Mr. Canning, he persuaded Charles Fox to muffle himself in a great coat, and he did the same, when they went on horseback, Tickel and Richardson going in a post-chaise. The purpose was to hover near the chaise, and to make Tickel and Richardson fear they were in danger of being attacked by highwaymen. The night was dark and favoured the joke, otherwise the size of Charles Fox might have betrayed him. He must, indeed, have appeared like Falstaff, when concerned in the robbery at Gadshill.

Richardson told me that he was persuaded by Sheridan to accompany him to Putney, with the assurance that Mrs. Sheridan was anxious to see him, that he had promised to bring him, and that Mrs. Sheridan was preparing a nice supper for him according to his taste. Sheridan knew that Richardson, though not inordinately attached to the pleasures of the table, was not however indifferent to them, and therefore frequently on the road congratulated Richardson and himself on the good cheer which Mrs. Sheridan was preparing for them. When they reached Putney there was nothing in the house but bread and cheese, and about the fourth part of a bottle of port in the decanter, nor had Mr. Sheridan any credit in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Sheridan was certainly a good-natured man, and capable of great fortitude when occasion required. When Drury-lane theatre was destroyed by fire, the House of Commons adjourned, from motives of respect and sympathy, on account of the dreadful stroke which had fallen upon one of their distinguished members; contrary to the desire of Mr. Sheridan, who observed that the business of the country ought not to be interrupted and suspended by any private

loss. The measure, however, having been adopted, Mr. Sheridan retired to the Piazza Coffee-house to a solitary dinner. Two of the principal actors of Covent Garden theatre were dining together in a distant box, and having finished their repast, they agreed that it would be proper for them to approach Mr. Sheridan, and expressed their concern for the calamity which had happened. Hearing from them that they were going to observe the scene of devastation, he expressed his desire of going with them. They quitted the tavern, and mingled with the crowd, standing for some time at the end of the piazza in Russell-street. Mr. Sheridan looked at the blazing ruin with the utmost composure. At length the gentlemen expressed their surprise that he could witness the destruction of his property with so much fortitude. His answer, which was recited to me by both of the gentlemen in identically the same words, was as follows: "There are but three things that should try a man's temper: the loss of what was the dearest object of his affections—that I have suffered; bodily pain, which, however philosophers may affect to despise it, is a serious evil—that I have suffered; but the worst of all is self-reproach—that, thank God, I never suffered!" The last of these declarations may be thought to be rather repugnant to the course of his life, yet I think it will admit of a satisfactory solution, according to the opinion of my friend Richardson, who was a very penetrating man, and could sound the depth of character with the utmost sagacity.

It was the opinion of that gentleman, that Mr. Sheridan, before he was led into ambitious views, and tempted into the ensnaring vortex of fashionable life, had the most upright disposition; and he used to declare as his solemn conviction, that, if Sheridan could be touched by a talisman into a man of fortune, he would immediately become a man of integrity and nice honour. As every thing relating to such a man as Mr. Sheridan cannot be wholly uninteresting, I may be permitted to mention the following circumstance.

I had dined with Mr. Richardson, and by desire of Mr. Sheridan he had promised to bring me with him at ten o'clock to the Shakespeare tavern, in Covent Garden, where Mr. Sheridan said he should dine privately for the purpose of writing some letters. We attended at the appointed time, and found that Mr. Sheridan had just closed his correspondence. He seemed to have roused himself into unusual activity, for he had written about thirty letters, which he tied up in a handkerchief, and then resigned himself to conversation. He immediately, according to the terms of his invitation, ordered burned bones and claret. Theatrical matters, without any politics, constituted the chief subject of conversation. In the course of the night, he lamented that he had not seen Mr. Garrick's performances as often as he might have done: "But," said he, "my father had often told me that he himself was the best living actor, and as I had seen my father perform very often, I had no great curiosity to witness an inferior. When, however, I saw Garrick, I was so struck with his wonderful powers, that I omitted no opportunity of attending his performances. He soon after observed that Kemble was a very good actor, and that



he thought even Garrick could not have performed Rolla so well. I ventured to ask him if this opinion did not savour of parental partiality in the author of that character. He contradicted this conjecture, and then I asked him if he would have written a monody on the death of Kemble. He said no, because Garrick was universally excellent, but that Kemble, whatever might be his merit, was limited in his genius.

Mr. Sheridan was averse to punning, to which I was perhaps at that time too much addicted, and resuming our conversation on Garrick, I asked which of Garrick's performances he thought the best? "Oh!" said he, "the *Lear*, the *Lear*." Indulging my usual habit, I could not forbear to observe, "No wonder you were fond of a *Leer*, since you married an *Ogle*." He then mentioned the name of a notorious punster of our acquaintance, and said it was too bad even for him. Mr. Richardson was very attentive to Mr. Sheridan, but spoke little. I believe many will envy me the conversation of two such men, which I enjoyed till three in the morning.

---

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

MR. RICHARDSON I had introduced to Dr. Monsey's table at Chelsea, and they were conversing on the subject of the universe; the doctor's manner of admitting the existence of a Supreme Being was in the following words: "I can't do without an intelligent agent." After all, what are the opinions of any human being? The wisest can only form his opinion on the opinion of others, and they must be wholly made up of the habits, prejudices, inclinations, and passions of each individual.

Monsey was an enemy to all forms, but was capable of very generous actions. He had a peculiar clock of a complicated description, which required a skilful workman, perfectly acquainted with its structure, to regulate its movements when necessary. For this purpose he became acquainted with a Mr. Barber, a watch-maker, who lived in Dean-street, Soho, to whom he gave five pounds a year for that service. On those occasions Barber used to dine with him, and I was one day of the party. When Barber was upon the steps performing his office on the clock, the doctor was sitting by the fire with his legs on the table, as he said he courted as much as he could the horizontal posture, in order to give less trouble to the blood in its travels through the body. While Barber was wholly absorbed in his business, Monsey said in a loud tone, "Barber, I don't believe you'll ever be able to pay me the 100*l.* that I lent to you." Barber turned round, raised his spectacles on his forehead, and with ludicrous sincerity, as regular as the mechanism he had been handling, answered, "Why really, doctor, I believe I never shall." "Well," rejoined the

doctor, "if you cannot, I shall not ask for it." Neither of them was aware that any delicacy was necessary in the presence of a third person.

Another instance of Monsey's liberal disposition may tend to show that, however rough in manners, he was benevolent in his heart. Having heard that the late Mr. Windham, with whose father he had been intimate, had occasion for money at a particular period, Monsey called on him, and offered him the loan of any sum in his power, and for any period. Mr. Windham was surprised that Monsey had heard of his exigency, but accepted the loan of 500*l.*, which was duly returned, but not without a struggle on the part of Monsey against receiving interest.

Mr. Windham's father was, by Monsey's account, a stout resolute man, fond of athletic exercises, which propensity his son partly inherited. The only blemish on the character of the son was the cold unfeeling manner in which he spoke of Mr. Pitt, when the death of the latter was announced in the House of Commons, and a proposal was made for an adjournment on account of that melancholy event. But Mr. Windham was a fine, spirited British character, and an able statesman.

The change in his character after he became conspicuous in politics is not unworthy of notice. When Sheridan, who was intimate with him, was asked what sort of person he was, his answer was, "Windham has a nice, delicate, refined, fastidious understanding." Those, I remember, were his very words.

I was present at one of the annual celebrations at Chelsea Hospital (indeed at both) when Mr. Burke was paymaster, and the elder Mr. Boswell was present. The conversation turned upon Sir Joseph Mawbey. After some animadversion upon the peculiarities of that gentleman, and during a short pause among the company, Monsey said, "It is curious to contemplate the immense difference among human beings, beginning with Sir Isaac Newton, and descending to Sir Joseph Mawbey." Boswell immediately said, "When you come to Sir Joseph you are not far from the pigs" (alluding to Sir Joseph's business as a distiller). "Yes," said Burke, "it is worse than the *half-way-house*." Young Burke, a delicate young man, added, "I have heard him called a pig of lead," and then the subject ended. But after all, however politic smight bias opinions, Sir Joseph Mawbey was considered by his friends as a public-spirited character, and a man of taste, and in the latter capacity has displayed his talents in many poetical effusions. But what will not party do to sour the temper and corrupt the judgment!

Sir George Howard was the governor of Chelsea Hospital at that time, and instead of giving scope to the powers of Mr. Burke, he bored the company with old military stories that are generally known, and much better related in all printed narrations. But he was the presiding authority, and as "a dog's obeyed in office," even the eloquence of a Burke, the playful exuberance of a Boswell, and the



learned humour and odd eccentricities of a Monsey, were nullified by the garrulity of old age.

My admiration of Mr. Burke would induce me not to mention what passed previous to the dinner, if it did not tend to illustrate human nature, and to show that the greatest characters are not exempt from human weakness.

Mr. Burke, as paymaster, had some accounts to settle with the officers of Chelsea Hospital before dinner. When they were settled, he had to pass about ten yards in the open air to the dinner-hall. He had not to pass through what might even be deemed a mist, but the moment he entered he desired some brandy to rub upon his elbow, as he feared he might otherwise suffer from cold. Everybody was immediately on the alert to assist him. He pulled off his coat, (evidently a new one for the occasion,) gave the coat to one, pulled up his shirt-sleeve, dipped his fingers into the cup with brandy held by another, and contrived to employ every one somehow or other all the time he rubbed his elbow. He, however, amused his volunteer servants with some jokes during the operation; and the sportive condescension of so great a man, he being also the paymaster, seemed to be considered as a rich reward for their assiduity in his service.

I should not have mentioned this trifling incident, if it did not correspond with a similar circumstance which I had heard many years before upon unquestionable authority, and if it did not develop in some degree the private character of Mr. Burke. On some important debate which was expected in the House of Commons, Lord Rockingham was anxiously waiting for Mr. Burke, in order to hear what had passed, and when from the knocking at the door he had reason to believe that Mr. Burke had arrived, the noble lord could not restrain his solicitude, but actually went down into the hall to question him before he quitted the sedan-chair which conveyed him. Mr. Burke, instead of answering his noble patron, acted exactly the part of the nurse in Romeo and Juliet, when the young lady is impatient to know what message the former had brought from her lover. Mr. Burke turned about in the sedan-chair, complained of the fatigue he had endured, declared that he was unable to answer, and kept Lord Rockingham in restless eagerness at the side of the chair till Burke thought proper to quit it.

If this conduct, compared with the former instance, was not insolent pride, or at least gross affectation, to use the mildest term, it would be difficult to say what is. It may be asked what was Mr. Burke's motive; and perhaps it may be said, that people who rise in the world above their hopes, whatever may be their abilities, like to reduce their superiors, and to drive from their minds all humiliating recollections of their original condition. Such was the case with my father's old friend Hugh Kelly, who, instead of introducing ordinary names in his female comic characters, styled them Hortensias and Theodoras, and made one of his dramatic gentlemen address a letter to another by the name of Craggs Belville, Esq. as I have before

observed. Poor Kelly could not help trying all expedients to efface every remembrance of the humility of his origin.

The admirers of great talents, and particularly of Mr. Burke, can have no reason to be displeased with the record of these trifling incidents; as they not only serve to develop human nature, but to console mankind in general for the vast superiority of those who seem as if they belong to a higher order of beings, though they must participate in all the infirmities of their fellow-creatures.

There are, however, charges of a more serious kind which the pen of history will record, which cast an indelible stain upon the life of that illustrious statesman.

It is evident from Mr. Burke's character, that he did not possess the feelings of a liberal and gentlemanly mind. His conduct towards Mr. Hastings may be cited as a proof. It has been said that a great man struggling with adversity is a sight worthy of the gods; and why? Because it is to be supposed that the gods would look on him with pity, and with a disposition to remove his sufferings. Who can deny that Mr. Hastings was a great man? and what could be a greater fall than, after having reigned with almost boundless authority in his Eastern government, to be reduced to the necessity of kneeling before a number of his fellow-creatures, and of receiving their permission to rise? Did Mr. Burke emulate the gods in his treatment of this great man in adversity? On the contrary, he treated him with the savage malignity of a fiend.

I remember, when I was one day present in the House of Lords during the impeachment, Mr. Burke, after uttering the most abusive epithets against Mr. Hastings, made some assertion, which affected the latter so strongly, that human patience was exhausted, and in an audible whisper he, in merely a word, contradicted the virulent declaimer. Mr. Burke happened to hear him, and immediately turning round, exclaimed with vehemence, "I care not what is said by the culprit at the bar; he is in the condition of an ordinary culprit, who, when the officers of justice are conducting him through the streets to prison, insults every person who comes near him as he passes." This brutal insult seemed to excite general disgust, but that feeling did not mitigate the rancour of Mr. Burke.

I was present at this scene of brutality, and was shocked to see the indifference with which Mr. Burke appeared to treat the general sentiments of the assembly, who seemed indignantly and deeply to feel the pitiable situation of the victim of his persecution.

The following article I recently saw in a public newspaper, and I insert it literally in this place, to justify my opinion of Mr. Burke, not having the least doubt that it was founded on fact:—"The celebrated Edmund Burke was one of the members appointed by the House of Commons to enforce the charges of crime against Mr. Warren Hastings, and one day when he had been pouring out all his splendid talents in a rich display of oratory against the accused, he addressed the assembly of peers, ladies, and gentlemen, in the following terms: 'When I look round this glorious circle, bright with all that is high in



rank, all that is powerful in talent, all that is amiable in virtue, all that is brilliant in beauty, and then turn my eyes to the criminal at the bar, my mind is convulsed with horror, and I sicken at the sight. The orator then placed his hands on the table before him, and dropped his head into them, as if overwhelmed by the dreadful contemplation."

On coming out of Westminster Hall after this splendid oration, Burke could not find his carriage, and Lord Yarborough's having just drawn up, the peer offered to take him home. The ebullition of Burke's mind had not subsided, and on the way, without considering the indelicacy of appealing to one who was ultimately to pronounce judgment on the case, he proceeded to re-urge the arguments on his noble auditor, concluding with the eager inquiry, "Do you not think this man a great criminal?" Lord Yarborough, whose correctness of intellect was known to all who had the opportunity of knowing him, immediately answered, "Burke, all I can say at present is, that either you or Hastings deserves to be hanged, but I cannot now tell which of the two." This answer is as honourable to the noble lord as it is disgraceful to the person who gave occasion to it. But the whole persecution of Mr. Hastings arose from party feelings, if not wholly from the vindictive rancour of Mr. Burke.

Mr. Cooke, a native of Cork, and a barrister-at-law, who came to this country in the year 1766, with letters of recommendation to the two Burkes, to Oliver Goldsmith, and other distinguished persons of that day, was particularly well acquainted with the characters of Edmund and Richard Burke, and he spoke of them with severe reprobation. He said that he was once induced to accept a bill for the latter of forty pounds, to pay for some wine which the Burkes had jointly consumed. Richard Burke kept out of the way, and Cooke was threatened with arrest for the forty pounds, when he had not forty shillings at command. Feeling for his situation, the holder of the bill agreed to wait till Cooke had made application to Edmund Burke, that he might induce his brother to honour the bill. Edmund at first said that it was his brother's concern, though he had partaken of the wine; but when Cooke, who at that time subsisted by his connexion with newspapers, and was a proprietor of one, threatened to make the matter public, Mr. Burke desired that he would send the creditor to him, and he would arrange the matter one way or other. Cooke did so, and never heard any more of the business.

Mr. Cooke, whose veracity I had no reason to distrust, after an intercourse of nearly forty years, assured me that he always considered the impeachment of Mr. Hastings as the result of personal rancour on the part of Mr. Burke, the reason of which has been already noticed.

Mr. Burke, with all his talents, all his knowledge, and all the splendour of his reputation, had but a vulgar mind. What must be thought of the mere taste of a man, who spoke of Mr. Hastings "falling from his high estate," when he was in helpless submission before him, in the following terms: "He lay down in his sty of infamy, wallowing

in the filth of disgrace, and fattened upon the offals and excrements of dishonour."

Mr. Burke's pamphlet against the late Duke of Bedford was written more in the style of a carcass-butcher than of a gentleman. The duke had objected to the grant of an enormous pension to Mr. Burke, —and what were the merits that deserved it? His bill for the reduction of the national expenditure went upon abuses, the growth of time and negligence, which were generally mentioned, and which national wisdom and national necessity would have "known without a prompter," and would no doubt in due season have corrected. I do not pretend to be much of a politician, but presume to say, nevertheless, of his famous "Reflections on the French Revolution," a work of more importance to society than any of his other compositions, that there was a great parade of speculative reasoning on those political theories of the French usurpers, which were too likely to be transient in duration to call for such elaborate discussion and excursive declamation.

I remember, soon after the publication of this work, I had the pleasure of dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds at his house in Leicester-square, and the convivial disposition of the elder Mr. Boswell, who had not received his due proportion of wine, obliged the great artist to give us a supper. The party at dinner consisted of the late Lord Stowell, then Sir William Scott; the late Mr. Courtenay, the Irish wit of the House of Commons; the elder Mr. Boswell; a nephew of Dr. Robertson, the historian; and myself. After dinner, cards were introduced, and at the end of a few rubbers, Sir William and Mr. Courtenay retired, leaving Mr. Boswell, Dr. Robertson's nephew, and myself. It was my wish to follow the example of those gentlemen and retire, not to break in upon the regular habits of our host, lest I should preclude myself from the chance of a future invitation to so very agreeable a society; but Mr. Boswell assured me that Sir Joshua had ordered a supper from respect to the young Scotsman's uncle, and that I should be thought ungracious in leaving him to entertain a total stranger. I therefore remained without reluctance, as I wished as much as possible, consistently with propriety, to prolong my intercourse with our courteous, well-bred, and intelligent host.

In the course of the supper, Mr. Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution" happening to become a topic of conversation, I ventured to observe that I thought if Dr. Johnson had been alive, and had written on the subject, he would not have devoted so much time to the examination of evanescent theories, but would have treated the matter with a deeper knowledge of human nature, and more philosophical energy. Sir Joshua did not agree with me, but spoke highly of the work as a masterly effusion of political eloquence. With the highest respect for the judgment of the great artist, it may not be improper to observe, that he was a shrewd practical politician. It was a maxim with him, that praises of the dead were useless, and ought to be avoided when they were likely to offend the living. That the dead were nothing and the living every thing. His policy therefore



would probably have been puzzled, if Johnson had been living, and had employed his great powers on the same subject.

With respect to the rumour that Burke was Junius, it is certain that many passages in the letters of that spirited writer strongly resemble passages in Burke, but the general style of the two authors seems to preclude the possibility of Burke's being able to reduce his expansive, flowery declamation to the systematic, terse, condensed, emphatic, pointed, and sarcastic manner of the Great Unknown, under the shadow of a mighty name. Dr. Kelly, of Finsbury-square, has brought the suspicion nearer to Burke than any preceding writer; though Mr. Taylor, the intelligent bookseller, has certainly raised a strong presumption in favour of the pretensions of Sir Philip Francis. Independently, however, of the difficulty of believing that Sir Philip had talents sufficient for the work, the dates of some of the letters, and the situation of Sir Philip at the time of publication, render it a matter of impossibility. Perhaps, if the author were known, the charm would be dispelled; but if he himself is to be believed, he never can be known, for he says, "I am the sole depositary of my own secret, and it shall perish with me." So that if it were ever to be really developed, it could not excite any confidence in opposition to the solemn declaration of the author.

As the question of who was the author of Junius will be an interesting one as long as literature shall exist, I may be permitted to prolong the subject. It is evident that Junius was as artful as he was ingenious, intelligent, and eloquent. Though no man might more properly be trusted than my worthy old friend Mr. H. S. Woodfall, yet, as there could be no reason for trusting him, when Junius says that Mr. Woodfall may some time know him, and asked him to tell candidly if he guesses who he was, Junius is playing a trick, for he must have been conscious that he was wrapped in impenetrable mystery. And when he says that he had been governed by other people in writing contrary to his opinion upon a particular subject, he either forgot the declaration of his impenetrable secrecy, or again practised an artifice for some secret purpose.

Some persons are born with a genius for artifice, as well as others for poetry, painting, music, &c., and Junius was one of the number. It is curious to observe the different manner in which he first speaks of our estimable monarch George the Third, and that in which he afterward treats him. In his first letter he says, "When our gracious sovereign ascended the throne, we were a flourishing and a contented people. If the personal virtues of a king could have ensured the happiness of his subjects, the scene could not have altered so entirely as it has done. The idea of uniting all parties, of trying all characters, and distributing the offices of state by rotation, was gracious and benevolent to an extreme, though it has not yet produced the many salutary effects which were intended by it. To say nothing of the wisdom of such a plan, it undoubtedly arose from an unbounded goodness of heart, in which folly had no share. It was not a capricious partiality to new faces; it was not a natural turn for low

intrigues; nor was it the treacherous amusement of double and triple negotiations. No, sir, it arose from a continued anxiety in the purest of all possible hearts for the general welfare."

After this high eulogium on the royal character, we find Junius representing the same excellent monarch as one of the worst men in his dominions, and for no other reason than that he did not adopt the measures recommended by Junius.

The same inconsistency is observable respecting Wilkes. In his eighth letter, addressed to the Duke of Grafton, he says, referring to Wilkes, "Now, my lord, let me ask you, has it ever occurred to your grace, while you were withdrawing this desperate wretch, M<sup>c</sup>Quirk, from that justice which the laws had awarded, and which the whole people of England demanded against him, that there is another man *who is the favourite of his country*, whose pardon would have been accepted with gratitude, whose pardon *would have healed all our divisions*? Have you quite forgotten that this man was once your grace's friend?"

In his letter to the king, he speaks of Wilkes as "A man not very honourably distinguished in the world," whom he had before described as "the favourite of his country, whose pardon would have healed all our divisions." And in the same letter he says, "Pardon this man the remainder of his punishment, and if resentment still prevails, make it, what it should have been long since, an act, not of mercy, but contempt. He will soon fall back to his natural station—a silent senator, and! hardly supporting the weekly eloquence of a newspaper. The gentle breath of peace would leave him on the surface, neglected and unmoved. It is only the tempest that lifts him from his place." "The favourite of his country!"

Junius accused his majesty of having "affectedly renounced the name of Englishman," because his majesty George the Third had said, that he gloried in having been "born a Briton;" meaning to use conciliatory language towards the people of "Great Britain" in general, and not to pay any peculiar compliment to those of the north. This is an insinuation unworthy of Junius.

---

## CHAPTER XLIX.

VOLTAIRE. This author, in his interesting Life of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, relates the extraordinary visit of that monarch to the Elector Augustus at Dresden, before the former left Saxony, in a manner very different from what I heard it described by Dr. Monsey, who heard it from the Earl of Peterborough himself. Voltaire states, that while the king was in his camp at Altranstad, he was receiving ambassadors from almost all the princes in Christendom.



The Earl of Peterborough was at that time on a visit to the Swedish monarch, and he related the visit in the following manner:—

"I had dined with the king in his tent," said his lordship. "He despatched his dinner in a few moments, and then left me to finish mine at my leisure, throwing himself upon a sofa, and reading in an old Bible, with brass clasps and hinges. As soon as I had finished my repast, which I hastened in imitation of his majesty, the king asked me if I was inclined to take a ride. As every thing that a king desires should, I thought, be complied with, at least in matters of that kind, I readily assented. After riding a few miles, we came near to a fortified town, which, as far as I recollected, seemed to me to be Dresden. I asked the king if I was right. He replied in the affirmative, and said he was going to pay a visit to Augustus. I was quite in a state of consternation, and lost in wonder at what would be the result of this singular expedition, after he had deprived the Elector of Saxony of the throne of Poland, and otherwise treated him with great severity.

"When the king entered the court-yard of the palace, attended by me and a slight guard, he was immediately known by an old Slavonian, who had served under him in Sweden. The man immediately gave the alarm, and all was bustle and confusion in the palace. Charles dismounted, and at once entered the palace, desiring to see the elector, who immediately appeared, and after a few words asked him to dine with him, and me also, when I was announced. A repast was hastily prepared, and we sat at the table. The first dish was soup, and while the king was lifting the spoon to his mouth there was a great noise on the stairs, resembling the clatter of arms. I observed that, as soon as he heard the noise, he shifted his spoon into his left hand, and instantly put his right hand on his sword. The noise was soon discovered to be nothing but the jostling of silver dishes, and then he cautiously shifted his spoon to his right hand. The repast was soon ended, when he took his leave, and there was great courtesy on both sides.

"As we were returning, we met a large body of Swedish troops, headed by one of his favourite generals, who, thinking his sovereign had been surprised and made prisoner, were advancing to rescue him from his enemies. Finding that all was safe, they returned, after receiving the royal thanks for their zeal and promptitude. As we returned, I could not help telling the king that I noticed his conduct at the table when the noise occurred, observing that, however brave and skilful he might be, he could not have contended against numbers. He said in answer, that 'had any armed men entered the room, he had resolved first to cut down Augustus, and then leave the rest to fate and fortune.'"

This account is more characteristic of the monarch than that of Voltaire, and as well as I can recollect, Dr. Monsey told me that he either received it from Lord Peterborough himself, or Dr. Friend, who wrote an apology for his lordship; but as Dr. Monsey knew both, it is probable he had the authority of both.

Charles the Twelfth was the favourite hero of Dr. Monsey, who used to say that "though he was a coward himself, he always loved bravery." He told me that while he was in Norfolk, some foreigners visited the place with a puppet-show, and among them was an old Livonian soldier, who had served under the King of Sweden. Anxious to know something of his favourite hero, the doctor asked the man if he could recollect any thing respecting him. The man said all he could remember was, that a bomb-shell once burst very near to them both, and that he ran some paces away, but the king remained on the spot. Charles called to him and asked him why he ran, and the man answered that he was afraid of the bomb. The king made no reply, but the man added that he saw him lift his hands, and heard him say to himself, "Would I knew what fear is!"

As this anecdote was not likely to be the invention of an ignorant old soldier, it may be received as a genuine trait of the character of the Alexander of the north.\* After all, Charles was a savage hero. He cared nothing for the lives of his soldiers when his own ambition was concerned, however desperate his situation, or how many soever were "*killed off*," to use an expression of the late Mr. Windham, not much to the honour of his feelings. Charles's treatment of Patkul was an act of monstrous cruelty, which nothing but insanity could palliate. It was an act of deliberate ferocity that will always stamp an odium on his character. His behaviour also to the Turks at Bender was characterized by ingratitude, folly, and even madness. How would he have felt if he could have peeped into the book of fate, and have seen the throne of his heroic ancestors occupied by a subaltern of a revolutionary French army!

FRANCIS NEWBERY, ESQ. With this gentleman I became acquainted through the medium of my friend Sir Francis Freeling, who married his daughter. He was a scholar and a poet, and also a musician, or rather a lover of music, for as an instrumental performer I am not acquainted with his skill. He was a great admirer of Dr. Crotch, whose taste, judgment, and professional skill are well known. Mr. Newbery made many translations of the classical authors, particularly Horace, in which, as far as I can presume to judge, he fully entered into the spirit of the author. He also wrote many original compositions, which were set to music by Dr. Crotch and his other friend Mr. William Shield, whose moral qualities and professional talents he held in the highest esteem. He was also very much attached to the late Mr. Bartleman, the admirable classical singer, as he may fairly be styled, since his manner of singing was at once learned and impressive.

Mr. Newbery kindly invited me to his private and select concerts at his house in St. Paul's churchyard, where the charms of music, and his lively and intelligent conversation, constituted an exquisite repast. His amiable and accomplished daughter was the second

\* Voltaire relates a similar event, and probably it may be the same, though without Charles's exclamation, which was not likely to be heard, except by the soldier who was so near to him.



wife of the present Sir Francis Freeling, and a more pleasing, unaffected, and intelligent lady I never knew. Mr. Newbery was the son of the eminent and respectable bookseller, who purchased a partnership in the celebrated fever-powders of his friend Dr. James, and sold them in conjunction with the doctor's son for many years, till some untoward circumstance divided them. Mr. Newbery was very playful in conversation, as well as judicious and erudite, and though reputed to be a good scholar, was perfectly free from an ostentatious display of learning, but seemed chiefly anxious to excite conviviality and good-humour.

Mr. Newbery, not long before his death, unluckily perhaps for both parties, separated from his partner in the sale of Dr. James's medicines, a circumstance which induced me to write a poetic trifle, which I shall not insert in this place, satisfied that it received the approbation of my friend the late Francis Newbery, whose friendship was an honour.

ANDREW BAIN, M.D. This gentleman was a member of the College of Physicians, and one of the most eminent practitioners in London. Before he settled in London, he acquired a high reputation at Bristol Hot Wells. He had attended the first wife of Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan with so much kindness, assiduity, and solicitude, that on the death of that accomplished lady at that place, Mr. Sheridan, though by no means in affluent circumstances, sent to him a hundred pounds, enclosed in a letter, expressive of respect and gratitude,—a proof, as I have before said, that Mr. Sheridan only wanted the means to be just, honourable, and benevolent.

Dr. Bain, by all accounts, was a profound and elegant scholar, of which he gave ample proofs in some Latin dissertations on medical subjects. The doctor had a son and two daughters. The son I had the pleasure of knowing. He was bred to the church, and had a living at about the distance of a mile from his father's residence at Hefleton, in Devonshire; and this contiguity of the benefice enabled the family to be almost as often together as if they inhabited the same mansion, and a more happy family never existed. The son was learned and affectionate, and the daughters highly amiable and accomplished. In the midst of this cordial felicity, a disastrous event occurred; Mr. Bain and a Mr. Bosanquet were taking an excursion on an adjacent river, when the boat was overturned, and both gentlemen perished. To augment the calamity, this melancholy catastrophe happened within the sight of the two sisters, who were walking near the spot. It would be impossible to describe the misery of the father when he heard the lamentable tidings; he never was able to recover his spirits, and died within a few years after this fatal deprivation.

Another calamity happened in the family a few years after. Dr. Bain's sister was married to Mr. Hardie, a gentleman who held a situation in the East India House, in which he conducted himself with so much propriety, that on his retirement he not only enjoyed a liberal pension, but was presented with a large sum for his faithful and useful services. This gentleman's foot happening to slip as he

was going up stairs, he fell backwards, and was killed on the spot. I knew him well; he was amiable, intelligent, and good-humoured. His widow, whom I have the pleasure of knowing, felt an irreparable and inconsolable loss by the death of this worthy man, but her piety and benevolence enabled her to sustain it with fortitude. By her intimate connexion with her brother, and his kind attention and instructions, she possesses great medical knowledge and judgment, and by her good sense and experience, she is an agreeable and instructive companion.

Before Dr. Bain retired from his profession, and settled at his seat in Devonshire, he invited me to dine with him, for the purpose of introducing me to Mr. Charles Sheridan, the son of Mr. R. B. Sheridan, as one of the old friends of his father. Mr. Charles Sheridan inherits in a great degree the talents of his father. He has travelled into Greece, and has published a very intelligent tract upon the present situation of that country, and on the hopes, expectations, and prospects of the descendants of its ancient sages, heroes, and poets, whose history, real and fabulous, will always render them the delight of mankind.

The late MR. CHRISTIE. With this gentleman, who was fully entitled to that designation, I had the pleasure of being acquainted many years, and a more respectable character I never knew. Besides being possessed of an excellent understanding, which would probably have enabled him to make a distinguished figure in any walk of life, I should venture to say that he was peculiarly fitted for the profession which he adopted. There was something interesting and persuasive, as well as thoroughly agreeable in his manner. He was very animated, and it may be justly said, eloquent, in his recommendation of any article that he announced from his "Rostrum," as well as in occasional effusions of genuine humour. He was courteous, friendly, and hospitable in private life, and was held in great esteem by his numerous friends, among whom there were many of high rank.

It was reported, and I believe truly, that he lost considerable property by his confidence in Mr. Chace Price, a gentleman well known in the upper circles of his time, and more admired for his wit and humour than for the strictness of his moral principles. It was understood that Mr. Christie's loss by this gentleman amounted to about five thousand pounds; and this event afforded an additional proof of the generous feelings of Mr. Garrick, who, hearing of the loss and of the high character of Mr. Christie, though but little acquainted with him, with great delicacy offered to accommodate him with the full amount of his loss, if his consequent situation rendered such assistance necessary or expedient. Whether Mr. Christie had occasion to avail himself of this liberal offer, I know not, but that it was tendered is certainly true, and it corresponds with the testimony in favour of Mr. Garrick's benevolent disposition, as given by Dr. Johnson, by Mr. Smith the actor, in several of his letters to me, and by my late friend Mr. Arthur Murphy.

Though Murphy was very often involved in dramatic squabbles



with Garrick, and used to speak of him in very harsh terms, yet he always admitted that he was the greatest actor in the world, and also that he was benevolent and generous in private life.

As a proof of the estimation in which Mr. Christie's character was held, particularly by the great Earl of Chesterfield, a nobleman distinguished for his intellectual powers and knowledge of mankind, as well as for the polish of his manners, I relate the following fact, which was told to me by my late esteemed friend Sir Francis Bourgeois. Mr. Christie had a particularly valuable collection of pictures to dispose of, most of which were of very high reputation abroad. Anxious that this collection should be distinguished from those of less celebrity, he waited upon the Earl of Chesterfield, to whom he had the honour of being known. It happened that the earl had seen many of the pictures in question during his travels. Mr. Christie told his lordship how anxious he was that these pictures should excite the attention which they deserved, and he requested that his lordship would condescend to look at them. His lordship promised to attend the public view, and gave Mr. Christie leave to announce his intention among his friends, or wherever he thought proper, and in order to give *éclat* to the occasion he promised to come in state. On the day appointed, therefore, the room was crowded in the expectation of seeing this venerable and celebrated nobleman, who arrived in a coach and six with numerous attendants. The company gave way and afforded a convenient space for his lordship. He was attended by Mr. Christie, who took the liberty of directing his lordship's attention to some pictures, and requested to be favoured with his opinion of the chief productions in the room. The earl, who came merely to serve Mr. Christie, spoke in high terms of several of the pictures which he had seen on his travels, and also of others pointed out to him by Mr. Christie, as if they were equally recollected by him. The auditors pressed as near as respect for his lordship would permit them, in order to hear and circulate his opinions. After remaining in the room till the purpose of his visit was fully accomplished, to the gratification of the company, his lordship, gracefully bowing, retired in the same state, accompanied to his carriage by Mr. Christie; and the result was, that the additional reputation which the collection acquired by his lordship's condescension in supporting this ingenious expedient, enabled Mr. Christie to sell it to the best advantage. It need not to be observed, that if Mr. Christie had not been held in much esteem by his lordship, the earl would hardly have been induced to act this kind and condescending part in his favour. It may not improperly be said that Lord Chesterfield himself derived some advantage on this occasion; for in addition to his high character as a statesman and a wit, it also gave him the reputation of a judicious connoisseur, as well as that of a condescending patron.

I remember calling on Mr. Christie one morning, just before he was going into his great room to dispose of an estate. Always alive to the interest of his employers, he requested that I would act as a bidder. I observed, that if any of my friends happened to be present

they would laugh if they saw me come forward on such an occasion, and that, as it would be totally new to me, I should commit some blunder. He however repeated his request, and I assented. It happened as I apprehended, for I made a bidding beyond that of a *bona fide* purchaser, who would go no farther, and the estate was knocked down to me. I apologized for my blundering ignorance, which Mr. Christie treated with his usual good-nature and affability, and insisted on my staying to dine with the family.

Mr. Christie was loyal and firm in his political principles, and moral and just in his private conduct. I have not only had the pleasure of dining with him at his own house, but of meeting him at other tables, where he was treated with the respect and attention to which he was fully entitled by his good sense, general intelligence, and courteous demeanour. He had two sons, one of whom went in a military character to the East Indies, where, I understand, he died in the service of his country. He was a very fine young man.

Of the present Mr. Christie, who inherits the profession and the disposition of his father, it is proper that I should speak with reserve, lest I should offend his delicacy by what his diffidence might consider as unmerited panegyric; nor is it necessary, as he has obliged the world with some publications which not only demonstrate his learning, judgment, and deep research, but which are marked by unaffected piety. Indeed, I heard that he was educated for the church, of which, from his classical attainments and the purity of his morals, he would doubtless have proved a distinguished ornament. He holds a very high rank in his profession, and is mentioned with great respect by all his competitors. I have long had the pleasure of being acquainted with him, and number him among the most valuable of my friends. It is with pleasure I add, that he is favoured with the friendship of many persons of high rank, as well as with that of many of the most learned and enlightened members of the church. The late Mr. Christie had been twice married. His son is the issue of his first marriage, and his widow is living with a respectable competency.

---

## CHAPTER L.

THE late SIR HOME POPHAM, and the late SIR THOMAS BOULDEN THOMPSON, were among my juvenile friends. The talents and valour of Sir Home are well known to the world at large, but it is not equally known that with all his ardour for his profession, and his skill in naval tactics, evident in some signals which he invented, and which I understood were highly approved, he was a good general scholar. I once wrote a poetical epitaph on a late great admiral of merited professional eminence, but of a stern, vindictive, and unrelenting character, a copy of which was often requested by some of



my naval and other friends, but from a regard to my own personal security always refused. It was, however, so eagerly desired, that I was often requested to read it in company, and therefore at that time generally carried a copy in my pocket. On one occasion, after I had read it, a friend endeavoured to snatch it from me, and his wife knowing his wishes, made the same attempt; but as their hands struck against each other, I was able to rescue my manuscript, and from that time I only carried the first word of each line, relying upon my memory for the rest, and used to repeat the whole without the danger of a seizure.

Sir Home Popham used to call on me occasionally to hear it, and one morning while I was reading it to him, I observed that he was writing during the time on a piece of paper before him, and apprehending that he was taking my lines in short-hand, I stopped, and looking at what he was about, found that he was actually taking it in Greek characters to disarm my suspicion.

I may be thought extremely vain in thus recording my trifle, but I may appeal to my old and worthy friend Sir Francis Hartwell, whose friendship I have the pleasure to retain, whether such was not its influence at the time. Sir Home Popham's friendship with me continued to his death, by which I lost a valuable companion, and the nation a gallant and able officer. And now for a proof of the uncertainty of friendship.

I was equally intimate with, and attached to Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson. He was the reputed nephew of Captain Thompson, generally called Commodore Thompson, a gentleman of agreeable manners and well-known literary talents. He was the author of many admired compositions in verse and prose; and he published a correct and valuable edition of the works of Andrew Marvel, proving that the well-known ballad of "Margaret's Ghost" was written by that sturdy and disinterested patriot, and not by Mallet, who usurped the reputation; as also that admirable hymn beginning with

The glorious firmament on high,

which Addison introduced into "The Spectator," without claiming the merit of writing it, but nevertheless, leaving the world to consider it as his composition.

Sir Thomas told me more than once, that though he was generally reputed to be the nephew of Captain Thompson, he knew of no other father,—a proof, at least, that the captain had been a truly affectionate uncle. Sir Thomas, during our early acquaintance, resided at Epsom, and was frequently in the habit of sending me game. He often said, that if he ever became an admiral, I should be his secretary, if no better prospect offered. After his gallant and skilful conduct at the battle of the Nile, he again resided at Epsom, and I remember that when he sent me a hare, in returning my thanks I said in my letter, that I should think I was eating a lion, and hoped

that it would inspire me with such valour as he had displayed in the service of his country.

When he called on me after the battle of Copenhagen, and I saw his wooden leg, I could not help shedding tears to see a friend so disabled; but forcing a smile, I said, "There's now an end to my secretaryship." "Why so?" said he; "if I am again employed as an admiral, I shall keep my promise." He soon after became comptroller of the navy-board, and meeting him at the Admiralty, I asked if he could give any situation to compensate for my disappointment as secretary. He told me that he had no power, as the Admiralty engrossed all the patronage; and from that time our friendship ended. When I met him afterward, he gave me a slight bow, and at last we used to pass each other as if we had never been acquainted. I could not but regret that so manly a character, and so gallant and able an officer, was not superior to the pride which arose from his gradual elevation, and the consequent disparity of my condition. Alas! for poor human nature!

MR. FRANKS. This gentleman, whom I knew many years ago, was of the Jewish persuasion, but with a truly Christian disposition. He was, I believe, a merchant before I knew him, but had retired from business, and resided at Mortlake. He was so highly esteemed in that village and the neighbourhood, that he was chosen churchwarden, an office which he willingly assumed and discharged in such a manner as fully to confirm and augment the reputation he had acquired. He was very fond of music, and a good judge of musical performers. I heard him relate the following anecdote, at the table of my old friend the Rev. Richard Penneck.

Mr. Franks said, that an admirable performer, named Dupuis, came from Paris with an introduction to him as a patron of music; that Dupuis was one of the finest, if not the best, performer on the violin he had ever heard. His talents soon procured him an introduction into the best societies, and the patronage which he experienced enabled him to live in a very splendid manner. After acquiring a high reputation and good connexions, he was suddenly missed, and nobody could tell what had become of him. A few years passed and his skill was not forgotten, nor curiosity as to his fate much abated. At length Mr. Franks had almost ceased to remember and to inquire about him. Happening to pass through the place where May Fair was formerly held, at the fair-time, he heard the sound of a violin in a common public-house, where a show was exhibited. Struck by the admirable skill of the performance, he ventured into the house, and immediately recognised his old favourite Dupuis, who knew him also, but did not affect to conceal himself. When he had concluded his solo, Dupuis, who had been so great a beau, and who then was attired in a very shabby garb, like a low workman, retired into a back-room with Mr. Franks, and addressed him as follows:—"My old and esteemed friend, you may naturally wonder to see me in such a place and in such humble attire, but the secret is this; I am in love with the daughter of the man who is exhib-



iting a show in this house, and while I appear on a level with herself, I have some chance of her favour; but if I were to appear like a gentleman, all my hopes would be at an end, and her smiles would be transferred to some vulgar rival. But I begin to be disgusted with this degrading state; I shall try my fortune with the family a few days longer, then assume my former rank in society, and you shall be the first person to whom I shall pay my respects."

Mr. Franks said that he was of course satisfied with this explanation, and parted from him, not surprised at the transformations which love produces in gods, according to the poets, as well as men, and confidently expected to see Dupuis in a few days, after he had conquered or gratified his passion. But no Dupuis appeared, and Mr. Franks therefore went to the public-house, in order to discover some clew to him. The fair had been ended some days, and the landlord could not give any information respecting the amorous minstrel, nor did Mr. Franks ever hear of him again. Judging from his altered manners, as well as his mean attire, Mr. Franks inferred that he had sunk in life, that he had become reconciled to the grovelling condition to which he was reduced, but that his story was a mere pretence, as he saw no beauty there that could be supposed to ensnare him. Mr. Franks concluded with saying, that Dupuis had no occasion to withdraw himself from creditors, as his talents provided him the power of living like a gentleman.

MR. JOHN REEVES. The country, in my humble opinion, was deeply indebted to this gentleman, who came resolutely forward at a very critical period, when certain aspiring demagogues were attempting to introduce the revolutionary principles of France into England, and when the language of some of the public journals strongly abetted their rebellious intentions. At this momentous crisis, he stood forth as the champion of the British constitution. He convened a meeting of loyal men, and formed a committee at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, for the purpose of circulating tracts to counteract the insidious and anarchical principles of revolutionary France. This loyal society held frequent meetings at that tavern, and disseminated innumerable pamphlets, calculated to refute the sophistical doctrines of the French orators, and our democratical writers, and to guard the British people against the impending danger. My late friends Mr. John Bowles and Mr. William Combe, were the authors of many of these pamphlets, which were widely diffused at the expense of the committee at the Crown and Anchor tavern.

Mr. Bowles published a tract, written with great vigour and elegance, which he entitled "A Protest against Paine." Mr. Combe wrote another entitled "A Word in Season;" and also, "Plain Thoughts of a Plain Man, with a word, *en passant*, to Mr. Erskine," afterward Lord Erskine, who had been ensnared by French doctrines, and had published a pamphlet in support of their principles. Mr. Reeves also at the same period published his four letters, addressed to the quiet good sense of the people of England. They were written with great vigour, sound reasoning, and contained much historical illustration.

Perhaps he treated too lightly the hereditary and representative branches of the British constitution, but he powerfully maintained that it was founded on the basis of monarchy.

Mr. Sheridan hastily condemned these letters, and instigated a prosecution against the author, who, however, was acquitted by the laws of the land. It is to be regretted that Mr. Sheridan came forward so indiscreetly on this occasion, as on other points in which his party had supported dangerous measures, he acted with an independent spirit, and was styled "the glorious exception." He was too indolent and too prone to personal indulgences to have studied the constitution with the zeal and assiduity with which Mr. Reeves explored its nature, and became profoundly conversant with its essential principles.

Mr. Reeves was the author of many legal and political tracts, and was through life distinguished for zealous loyalty. He was at Westminster school, and afterward at the university of Oxford, at the time when Mr. Combe was at the latter place. Mr. Reeves was very rich and very liberal. He adopted the son of his friend Mr. Brown, an old fellow-collegian, supported him in his own house, and took the trouble of teaching him Greek. The boy, however, proved a dissipated and worthless character, and was thrown into the Fleet prison by his creditors. Mr. Reeves released him at the expense of 1500*l.*, and took him again into favour; he died soon after, but if he had lived and reformed, he would probably have inherited the bulk of Mr. Reeves's large fortune.

I must here say something more of my friend Mr. JOHN BOWLES. I had the pleasure of being acquainted with him very early in life, and always found him firmly loyal and honourable. We both at the same time frequented an oratorical club, styled the Robin Hood Society, held in Butcher-row, Strand. Mr. Bowles, who was then preparing himself for the bar, often spoke at that place, and was heard with respect. My other old friend, the present Mr. Justice Garrow, who had then the same views, was also one of the most distinguished orators at that society, and powerfully displayed those talents which have since rendered him so conspicuous at the bar, and raised him to his present well-merited elevation.

Before our time the president of the society had been a Mr. Jacocks, a baker, in Soho. He was a man of profound sagacity. After the several speakers had delivered their sentiments, he summed up the arguments of the whole, and concluded with declaring his own opinion upon the subject in discussion: and always received the warm acclamations of the audience. The great Earl of Chesterfield frequently attended this society *incog.*, attracted chiefly by the abilities of the president, whom I have heard it said, he pronounced to be fit for a prime minister. My father, who was well acquainted with the abilities of Mr. Jacocks, though not personally known to him, once pointed him out to me in the street. I recollect him well, and never saw a more venerable figure. His house is still occupied by a baker, and is situated very near Monmouth-street.

Mr. Bowles, conceiving that the danger, though suspended, was not



at an end, continued to publish many works in support of the British constitution; but at length, modestly thinking that his name was too often before the public, sent forth his latter works anonymously. He was appointed one of the Dutch commissioners, and devoted his time to the investigation and arrangement of the complicated subject in discussion. The commissioners were charged with unnecessary delay, and even of deriving undue pecuniary advantages from a prolongation of the inquiry, but Mr. Bowles came forward in defence of himself and colleagues, and published a satisfactory vindication.

In justice to a gentleman named Jennings, who brought the charges, it is proper to mention, that he also published a pamphlet, in which he liberally acknowledged that he was mistaken, and had proceeded upon erroneous grounds.

Mr. Bowles was very intimate with Mr. Reeves and Mr. George Chalmers, and I had several times the pleasure of accompanying those gentlemen to dine with him on his retirement to Dulwich, conveyed in Mr. Reeves's carriage. I remember with much pleasure these occasions, as we were highly gratified by Mr. Bowles and his amiable lady. Mr. Bowles was warmly attached to Mr. Pitt. From motives of old friendship, and sympathy of political principles, he bequeathed one hundred pounds to me in his will, and Mrs. Bowles also favoured me with a mourning-ring, as a confirmation of the friendship of her lamented husband.

[MR. WILLIAM SHIELD. Perhaps there never was an individual more respected, esteemed, and admired than this late eminent composer. With a shrewd, intelligent, and reflecting mind, and a manly spirit, there was a simplicity in his manners that obviously indicated the benevolence of his disposition. Of his musical merits it would be unnecessary for me to speak, as his compositions were universally admired for their deep science as well as for their fancy, taste, and sensibility. His martial airs are characterized by bold expression and powerful effect. He was particularly esteemed by all his musical brethren, and a numerous train of private friends.

I once had the pleasure of taking Mr. Shield to drink tea with the veteran poet and musician Charles Dibdin the elder. They had never met before, and it was not a little gratifying to me to witness the cordiality with which these congenial spirits received each other. I also introduced Mr. Battishill, an eminent composer and performer, and Mr. Shield to each other for the first time.

Mr. M. G. LEWIS, better known by the name of MONK LEWIS. I never had the pleasure of knowing this gentleman, though we both mixed so much with the theatrical world; I only knew his person. But his character was so much respected, and his literary and dramatic talents rendered him at once so conspicuous, that he should not be passed without notice. His father held a situation in the war-office, and allowed his son 800*l.* a-year, while the latter was in parliament. His parents had been separated some years, and as the mother's allowance was scanty, the son, with true filial affection, gave a moiety of his income for her support. When the father heard of this act of

filial affection, he observed, that if his son could live upon 400*l.* a-year, he should reduce his income to that sum. The son then, at the hazard of a similar reduction, again divided his income with his mother. Such conduct ought to be recorded.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Lewis wrote his celebrated romance entitled "*The Monk*," though it must be acknowledged that the work displays great invention and descriptive power, and considerable poetic excellence. As this gentleman was much courted by the higher circles, and was a popular author, it is strange that he should have sunk into the grave with as little notice as if he were a common individual. He had visited the West Indies to look after some property which devolved to him, and as he was returning to this country, died on the passage. His death was simply noticed in the public journals, merely by his name, though some tribute to his talents and his memory might naturally be expected. His "*Castle Spectre*" was very popular and attractive, and was of great advantage to Drury-lane theatre. The following is told respecting this piece, for which he had not received his profits as the author. In some argumentative dispute with Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Lewis, meaning to reproach Mr. Sheridan for delaying the pecuniary recompense due to the author, offered to lay a sum equal to what the theatre had derived from "*The Castle Spectre*," that he was in the right. "No," said Mr. Sheridan, "I will not lay so large a sum as what the piece brought, but I will readily hazard what it is intrinsically worth." Soon after this satirical sally the author was duly rewarded.

COLONEL FREDERICK, whom I have mentioned before as the son of Theodore, King of Corsica by the voluntary choice of a whole people, was a particular friend of mine. He told me he was once in so much distress, that when he waited the result of a petition at the court of Vienna, he had actually been two days without food. On the third day a lady in attendance on the court, whom he had previously addressed on the subject of his petition, observing his languid and exhausted state, offered him some refreshment; he of course consenting, she ordered him a dish of chocolate, with some cakes, which rendered him more able to converse with her: in a short time they conceived a regard for each other, and were afterward married.

He told me she stated that her reason for delaying to procure an answer to his petition was in order to prolong the intercourse between them. How long the lady lived I know not; as I enjoyed his company, but did not think proper to inquire more of his history than he was disposed to relate. He had a son whom I knew, a very elegant young man, who was an officer in the British army, and was killed in the American war. He had a daughter also, named Clarke, whom I knew after the colonel's death. She had, I believe, some offspring, but to whom she had been married, and what became of her family, I never knew.

I remember that in the short interview which I had with her, in



consequence of the death of her father, she showed me the great seal, and some regalia of the crown of Corsica, which her grandfather had retained in the wreck of his fortunes. The colonel told me that he was once in the condition of a reading secretary to the great Frederick, King of Prussia, but he was treated by that monarch with such proud austerity that he grew tired of the service, and particularly as Voltaire, and other profligate philosophers, were suffered to converse with the monarch at table, while Frederick was obliged to stand in the room all the time. At length, having applied to the Duke of Wirtemberg, to whom his father was related, he was offered protection at his court. When he informed the King of Prussia of this arrangement, the latter said, "Ay, you may go, it is fit that one beggar should live with another." The colonel afterward joined his father during his adversity in this country, and I believe supported himself as a teacher of languages, for which I understood him to be well qualified. He related to me the following curious incident.

He said that while his father was in the Fleet prison for debt, Sir John Stewart was a fellow-prisoner on the same account. The latter had a turkey presented to him by a friend, and he invited King Theodore and his son to partake of it. Lady Jane Douglas was of the party. She had her child, and a girl with her as a maid-servant, to carry the child; she lived in an obscure lodging at Chelsea. In the evening, Colonel Frederick offered to attend her home, and she accepted his courtesy. The child was carried in turn by the mother, the girl, and the colonel. On their journey he said there was a slight rain, and common civility would have induced him to call a coach, but that he had no money in his pocket, and he was afraid that Lady Jane was in the same predicament. He was therefore obliged to submit to the suspicion of churlish meanness or poverty, and to content himself with occasionally carrying the child to the end of the journey.

The colonel used to consider that child as the rightful claimant of the property on which he was opposed by the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton; but whether his conjecture corresponds with the date of the transactions which took place in relation to the Douglas cause, is not within my knowledge. It is proper to observe, that Colonel Frederick stated his father to have been in the Fleet prison, but in a periodical paper entitled "The World," published in the year in which a subscription was proposed for the relief of King Theodore, he is represented as being then in the King's Bench prison.

The letters of Mr. Andrew Stewart, one of the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton, addressed to Lord Mansfield on this subject, are well known for diligent research, accurate reasoning, and a spirit of candour thoroughly consistent with zeal in the cause, and good breeding. These letters, as far as I understood, were thought to carry truth and conviction to the minds of all who were not interested in the pretensions of the claimant. Here I may properly introduce a manuscript note which was given to me by the late Reverend Richard Penneck. He had lent me Mr. Andrew Stewart's letters,

and he gave me this note as corroborative of Mr. Stewart's facts and reasonings. This note, which I copy from Mr. Penneck's handwriting, is as follows:—

"The reader, it is presumed, cannot be surprised, perhaps he may be pleased, at being informed that Monsieur Menager, whom he will find so often mentioned in these letters as accoucheur, has been sent to the galleys for life, for being concerned in a fraudulent business similar to the affair in question. This is an unquestionable fact." Mr. Penneck adds, "This note was found by a worthy friend in the frontispiece of the work (in MS.) in his possession."

The colonel related to me another curious anecdote, on which I rely, as I always found him consistent in his narrations. When Prince Poniatowski, who was afterward Stanislaus, the last King of Poland, was in this country, his chief, I might perhaps truly say, his only companion was Colonel Frederick. They were accustomed to walk together round the suburbs of the town, and to dine at a tavern or common eating-house. On one occasion the prince had some bills to discount in the city, and took Frederick with him to transact the business. The prince remained at Batson's Coffee-house, Cornhill, while Frederick was employed on the bills. Some impediment occurred, which prevented the affair from being settled that day, and they proceeded on their usual walk before dinner, round Islington. After their walk they went to Dolly's, in Paternoster-row. Their dinner was beef-steaks, a pot of porter, and a bottle of port. The bill was presented to the prince, who, on looking over it, said it was reasonable, and handed it to Frederick, who concurred in the same opinion, and returned it to the prince, who desired him to pay. "I have no money," said Frederick. "Nor have I," said the prince. "What are we to do?" he added. Frederick paused a few moments, then desiring the prince to remain until he returned, left the place, pledged his watch at the nearest pawnbroker's, and thus discharged the reckoning. My old friend Mr. Const, chairman of the Middlesex sessions, who was well acquainted with Frederick, says, that the article pledged was not Frederick's watch, but the prince's cane, which he held in great value; yet, as far as my recollection serves, it was the watch.

The prince, after he became monarch of Poland, occasionally kept up an intercourse with Frederick, and in one of his letters asked the latter if he remembered when they were "in pawn at a London tavern."

The colonel had lodged in Northumberland-street, in the Strand, long before I knew him; and according to the account which I heard from Mr. Const, was obliged to fly half naked from the house, which had taken fire, and was received into that of Mr. Stirling, the present respectable coroner for the county of Middlesex, who resided in the same street. Mr. Stirling offered the colonel an asylum in his own house gratuitously, and allotted to him the second floor, where he resided for many years.

The colonel's conversation on the classics, on military transactions,



and on the great German generals of that period, was highly instructive and amusing. While very much respected, and at all times an acceptable guest to many friends, he was unfortunately induced by an acquaintance to accept two notes. The man, who was a trading justice at that time, died before the notes became due, and Frederick, seeing that he should be responsible without any pecuniary resource, and apprehensive of confinement in a jail, formed the desperate design of suicide, borrowed a pistol of a friend, and shot himself one evening, in the church-yard of St. Margaret, Westminster. He called on me on the Wednesday previous to this fatal act, which took place on the following Friday. I was at home, but ordered myself to be denied, as I was then practising as an oculist, and was at the time going to visit a patient, whose case did not admit of delay. I, however, heard him inquire for me with the same vivid spirit with which he generally spoke, and bitterly reproached myself for not having seen him when he called, as it struck me that something might have arisen in conversation to have prevented the dreadful event.

The colonel, by his constant reading of classic authors, had imbued his mind with a kind of Roman indifference of life. He arose generally very early in the morning, lighted the fire when the season required it, cleaned his boots, prepared himself for a walk, took his breakfast, then read the classical authors until it was time to take exercise and visit his friends. This even tenor of life might have continued for many years if he had not unfortunately put his hand to the bills in question; but the prospect of a hopeless privation of liberty, and the attendant evils and horrors of a jail, operated so strongly upon his mind, habituated to ancient Roman notions, as to occasion the dreadful termination of his life by suicide.

---

## CHAPTER LI.

JOHN WOLCOT, M.D. I became acquainted with this extraordinary character in the year 1785, and, with some intervals, arising from suspicion and mistake on his part, I believe I was more intimate with him than any other of his numerous connexions. What chiefly promoted our intimacy was my sincere admiration of his talents, and his persuasion that I understood his genius and general character better than most of his other friends. I believe I may venture to say that such was the fact. I confess, I think he possessed an original genius, which entitles him to a very high rank in the literary annals of the country.

He was generally understood to be a good Latin scholar, and had made a considerable progress in the Greek language. His chief passion was for poetry, which he discovered very early in life, and

never relinquished. His tendency was chiefly to satire, but being a great admirer of the ladies, he very soon indulged himself in writing amatory verses. Yet, though many of them were marked by tenderness and elegance, his humour interposed, and they generally concluded with some epigrammatic point.

He was a great observer of Nature in every possible mode, and used to say, that, far from being exhausted, her works supplied an inexhaustible source of new imagery to an attentive observer. He often talked of the difference between the *made* poet and the poet of Nature. The former, he said, might produce very good poems, but their excellence was derivative, and they had nothing original in their composition; while the real poet studied Nature herself, and viewed life rather than books. This opinion may appear commonplace; it is however certain that there are more original thoughts to be found in his works than in any other author of modern times; nor, perhaps, in that respect, would it be extravagant to compare him with some of the best of our former writers. What Melmoth, in his "Fitzosborn's Letters," says of "The Spleen," written by Matthew Green, may fairly be said of Wolcot's "Lousiad," viz. that there are more original ideas in that poem than are to be found in any other work of the same extent.

I have been often laughed at for my high opinion of Dr. Wolcot's genius, but console myself with the notion, that they who ridicule me had either not read his works, or wanted judgment and humour sufficient to understand them. That he frequently fell into low imagery I readily admit, but it will always be found that it was still original, and not without a strong point.

There is a well-written account of the doctor in the "Annual Biography and Obituary for the year 1820," but the author is mistaken in some instances, particularly as to the success of his first publication, his "Lyric Odes on the Painters," which, far from being profitable, were so little noticed, except by the artists, that the publication cost him forty pounds. Soon after these odes were published, I was introduced to him accidentally by Mr. Penneck. I had read the "Lyric Odes," and when in the course of conversation I found that the doctor was the author of them, I was anxious to cultivate an acquaintance with so humorous and so original a writer. I then conducted a public journal, and by frequent extracts from his works, and the insertion of many of his unpublished poems, I brought the name of Peter Pindar into so much notice that Mr. Kearsley, then a popular bookseller, introduced himself to him, and was a ready and liberal purchaser of all his productions.

The doctor has often declared that he was indebted to my zeal to bring him into notice for half of his fame and fortune. I must, however, do myself the justice to declare that I endeavoured to give notoriety to his name before he wrote such reprehensible attacks upon our late venerable sovereign; but as people are too apt to feel pleasure in attacks on their superiors, and as the doctor at that time did not abound in money, my exhortations and entreaties had no effect in



opposition to his interest. He, however, hardly ever wrote any thing that he did not submit to me in manuscript; and I may confidently say, that I induced him to make many alterations and suppressions, which not only rendered his works less exceptionable, but most probably saved him from legal consequences.

I have often been surprised, as he was really a timid man, how he could venture to take such freedoms, not only with the royal character, but with many of the upper ranks. With respect to our late excellent monarch George the Third, he used to say, that he revered the British constitution, and held its political head in due veneration; but that he felt justified in sporting with the peculiarities of the private character of the monarch. It was in vain that I opposed these opinions, and referred him to Blackstone, to show the punishment annexed to works that were calculated to bring the character of the monarch into contempt. In short, he found the topic too profitable to be abandoned, and therefore pursued it to such an extent as to render it wonderful that it should not have attracted the attention of the law officers of government. If legal notice had been taken of his muse, she would certainly have been silenced, at least upon that subject; and I can affirm that upon one occasion, as I have already stated, when he was in fear that he should draw upon himself the vengeance of government, he had actually prepared to set off for America, and determined never to revisit this country. The apprehension, however, subsided, and impunity made him bolder.

His lines addressed to the infamous Thomas Paine during the French revolution, afford a proof of his attachment to the constitution of the country; and, to use his own expression, due care should always be taken by wise statesmen to prevent "the unenlightened million" from having any share in political power.

Here it may be proper to give some account of what was called Peter's pension, of which no true statement has ever appeared, though many have been published. We were one day dining with a gentleman, intimately connected with a member of the government at that time, and in the course of conversation the doctor expressed himself with so much vehemence against the French revolution, which was raging at that time, and the principles on which it was founded, that I jocularly said to our host, "The doctor seems to show symptoms of *briability*." The gentleman encouraged the joke, and addressing the doctor, "Come, doctor," said he, "with these opinions you can have no objection to support the government—shall I open a negotiation?" The doctor gave a doubtful, but not a discouraging answer, and then the subject dropped, but the next morning the doctor called on the gentleman, and knowing that he was in the confidence of government, asked him if he was serious in what he had said the day before. The gentleman, not being without alarm at the progress of French principles, and their ensnaring nature; aware too of the power of ridicule, and how formidable a weapon it was in the hands of the doctor; told him seriously that if he was really inclined to afford the support of his pen to government, he thought he could pro-

cure for him its patronage. The doctor said he had several works in preparation against ministers individually, which he would suppress if that would do, but was not disposed to be actively employed in favour of government. The gentleman, with some compliment to his satirical talents, told him that he could not negotiate on such terms, for, if he published libels, the law might be put in force against him; remarking at the same time, that by supporting government he would be acting upon his own declared principles, which were so hostile to those by which the French monarchy had been overthrown. After farther discussion, the doctor permitted him to open the negotiation. Though government had not given the least intimation on the subject, yet when so powerful a pen was offered, it was too well acquainted with the doctor's powers to negative the proposal. At length it was settled that the doctor should have three hundred a-year for active services. Wolcot stickled hard for five hundred a-year, but, finding that he could not succeed, he consented to the measure. He, however, wrote nothing but a few epigrams against the Jacobins, which he sent to the editor of "The Sun" newspaper. This, however, not being deemed an adequate service, I frequently advised him to be more active; but a sort of shame hung about him for having engaged in support of a government which he had so often abused, or rather its members, and I never could rouse him into action.

I should mention, that a difficulty had arisen as to the medium through which he was to receive the recompense. The gentleman who had opened the negotiation positively declined the office, and, as the doctor was prohibited from going himself to the quarter where it was to be received, matters seemed to be at a stand; however, as I was really an "alarmist," to use Mr. Sheridan's word, and thought highly of the advantage which might be derived from the doctor's talents, I offered to be the channel of remuneration. Wolcot, though he really did nothing more than what I have above mentioned, was constantly urging me "to bring the bag," as he styled it. Reluctant, however, to ask for money which he had done nothing to deserve, I delayed my application so long that he grew impatient, and asked me if he might go himself to the quarter in question. I answered that I thought it was the best way, for I had reason to believe he considered he was really to have five hundred a-year, and that the gentleman who had negotiated the business and myself were to divide the other two. The doctor then angrily applied to the fountain-head, and on inquiring what sum he was to have, was told that it was to be three hundred a-year, and that I had spoken of his talents in the highest terms, and of the advantages which might be expected from them. He then declared that he should decline the business altogether, and returned the ten pounds which he had taken of our host, as he said, to "bind the bargain." Disgusted with his suspicion, I reproached him on the occasion, and we separated in anger.

As I knew the doctor was too apt to give a favourable colouring to his own cause, and that he had represented the whole transaction as a trap to ensnare him, though the overture had actually come from



himself, I addressed a letter to him, and faithfully and fully detailed the whole affair, telling him that I kept a copy of my letter to read wherever I heard that he had misrepresented the matter. Many years of separation passed, but hearing he was blind, infirm, lame, and asthmatic, I resolved one Monday morning to begin the week with an extinction of all enmity between us, and went to his lodgings in Somers' Town on that day. I addressed him in the most friendly tone, but he did not recollect my voice, and when he understood who I was, he appeared delighted, pressed me to have a glass of brandy-and-water, though it was morning, and said that if I would stay, I should have a beef-steak or any thing else I could desire. In short, we were reconciled in a moment, and I repeated my visits as often as convenient to me, promising that I would positively drink tea with him on every Saturday. I found his faculties as good as ever, and his poetical talents in full vigour.

I often wrote several of his compositions from his dictation, which were not published, but fell into the hands of his worthless executor. I derived so much pleasure and instruction from his conversation, that I was constant in my attendance upon him on the stipulated day. Having, however, unavoidably omitted one Saturday, he sent one of his female servants to desire me to come, and to tell me that he had something for me. I went, when he desired me to take up the pen, and dictated the following lines, which he said he should have sent to me if he had been able to write, and they were the very last he ever suggested.

#### INVITATION.

Taylor, why keep so long away  
From one who hates a gloomy day?  
Then let not laziness o'ercome ye,  
Hasten with stories, wit, and rhyme,  
To give a fillip to dull time,  
And drive the d—n'd blue devils from me.

Ah! Taylor, "*non sum qualis eram*,"  
For the tomb I fear I near am,  
But who can hope to live for ever?  
One foot is in the grave, no doubt,  
Then come and try to help it out,  
An ode shall praise thy kind endeavour.

The ode, however, he did not live to write, which I sincerely regret, as I have reason to believe that it would have manifested at once, his favourable opinion of me, his genius, his humour, and his friendship.

A few days before his death he sent two landscapes to me, painted by the old masters, for one of which I had many years before offered to give him five guineas, which he refused, saying in his strong manner, "No—I won't sell pleasure." Both of these pictures were so much injured by negligence and bad treatment, that they were not worth accepting otherwise than as memorials of friendship. From

one of them, that which I had offered to purchase, my excellent friend Mr. Westall, R.A. kindly cut off the injured parts, and reduced it into a pleasing moonlight scene, which I now possess.

As far as I can presume to judge, Doctor Wolcot had a profound knowledge of painting, and a refined taste for that art. His objections were generally urged with original humour and ludicrous comparisons; which had all the force and accuracy of the most elaborate criticism. He said that his great aim was to make Opie a Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, but that he must first have made him a gentleman, which he found impossible. This remark, however, was made during his variance with that original artist, of whose talents he thought highly and deservedly.

The raillery which frequently took place between him and Opie was highly diverting. Wolcot's sallies were marked with vigour, with a classical point, and Opie's with all the energy of a mind naturally very powerful; their controversies always ended with laughter on both sides, and without the least ill will. The contest was what Johnson applies to the characters in Congreve's plays, an "intellectual gladiatorship," in which neither might be deemed the victor. The doctor and I used frequently to fall into contests of the same kind, but I found him generally too strong, and my only expedient was to make him laugh, by retorting some of his old sallies against me, which the company thought were my own, and he used to smile at my impudence in repeating them against him. Sometimes those in company who did not know us, were apprehensive that we should part in enmity, but we always went home arm-in-arm, as if nothing had happened.

My weekly visits continued many years, with unabated pleasure on my part, and I may presume much to the gratification of the doctor.

As a proof that he was a kind and considerate master, when one of his servants came to tell me that he had been taken ill, and was delirious when she left him, she wept all the time that she described his situation. I went as soon as I could in the afternoon, and then learned that he had recovered his faculties, but was asleep. I sat by his bedside, expecting he would awake, amusing myself with a volume of his works until ten o'clock. He then awoke, and I told him how long I had been there, observing that it was a dreary way home, and perhaps not quite safe, concluding with saying, "Is there any thing on earth that I can do for you?" His answer, delivered in a deep and strong tone, was, "Bring back my youth." He fell into a sleep again, and I left him. On calling on him the next day, I found he had died, as might be said, in his sleep, and that those words were the last he ever uttered.

Such was the end of a man who possessed extraordinary powers, great acquisitions, and an original genius. I cannot but consider him indeed as a man among those of the most distinguished talents that this country has produced, and whose works ought, and must be con-



sidered as compositions marked by extraordinary powers, inexhaustible humour, satire, and imagination.\*

There are reasonable doubts about the authenticity of his will. The person who possessed it was a very vulgar man, but very cunning, and well acquainted with the world. The doctor was disgusted with him, and only endured him because he hated solitude after he was blind. Wolcot, who thought him an honest man, told me that he had his will. I told him what the doctor had said, and he denied that he was entrusted with a will. After Wolcot's death, however, he said that he had found the will among some copper-plates, from drawings by the doctor, from which prints had been published. A very respectable person, who is a clerk in one of the offices in Somerset House, who was entrusted by Wolcot, and who used to receive dividends for him at the bank, assured me that it was impossible a will could be found in the alleged situation, as he had looked over the copper-plates a short time before; that no paper was among them; and that it was likewise impossible for the doctor, blind as he was, to have placed any paper there at a subsequent period, or to have found his way to the place where the copper-plates were deposited.

What strengthens the suspicion that the will was not genuine, is, that it was witnessed by two persons, whose names were wholly unknown to the servants, and whom they never remembered as visitors to their master. The servants were sisters, and the elder was a shrewd, intelligent, and attentive young woman. Their master had often mentioned the sums that he should respectively leave to them, and which the executor ultimately paid. He also paid the clerk whom I have mentioned fifty pounds, and me the same sum, which the doctor had desired him to specify in writing, and which he signed as well as he could in his helpless situation. Wolcot's then surviving sister, knowing my intimacy with him, wrote to me inquiring the particulars respecting his death, and expressing her surprise that he had not left her any thing, as he had signified to her in a letter which he had dictated and sent to her, that he hoped he should be able to leave her a few hundreds. I made a profile drawing of him, which his friend the elder Mr. Heath engraved, and which, with a biography

\* Doctor Wolcot may be said to have been profoundly conversant with the nature of man. He had mixed with various classes of mankind, and his knowledge of them rendered him very discerning, and of consequence very suspicious. The following anecdote appears to me to be a striking proof of his penetration, though to others, when the solution is known, it may be deemed a natural inference. He dined one day with a niece of Dr. Warburton, who, in speaking highly in praise of her uncle, expressed her surprise that ever he should be thought a proud man, "for, said she, "I have been with him when there were lords, bishops, and rich men in company, and he took more notice of me, and talked more with me, than with any of the rest." The poor woman, as Dr. Wolcot justly observed, could hardly have given a better specimen of the pride of her uncle, who, to show his contempt for *great people*, devoted his attention to a silly old gossip. People in general might consider the old woman's story as literally a proof of the humility of Warburton, and I probably among them, but the discernment of Wolcot led him to the proper interpretation of his conduct. This development may remind us of Columbus and the egg.

that I wrote of him, was inserted in the *Lady's Magazine*, of which Mr. Heath was then the proprietor. I sent the Magazine to the doctor's sister, who wrote a letter to me, thanking me for my attention, and requesting my acceptance of the second folio of Shakspeare's works, published by Hemings and Condell, which I received from the executor on producing her letter. The doctor left many boxes full of unpublished manuscripts of his own writing, for which the bookseller, it is said, offered a thousand pounds, but for which the executor demanded double the sum; and as he also is dead, they will probably be disposed of as waste-paper, though perhaps, if properly selected, they might prove a valuable addition to the poetical treasures of the country. The doctor's love of life was intense. He has often said that he would take a lease of five hundred years from nature. "What!" said I, "with all your infirmities?" "Yes," said he; "for while here you are something, but when dead you are nothing;" yet he firmly believed in the existence of a Supreme Being. I remember once mentioning the doctor's love of life to Mr. Sheridan, expressing my surprise. Mr. Sheridan said, that he would not only take a lease for five hundred years, but for ever, provided he was in health, in good circumstances, and with such friends as he then possessed; yet if he had taken due care of his health, and prudently managed his fortune, he might still be alive and an ornament to the country.

Dr. Wolcot had been in various parts of the world, and had mixed with all the different classes of mankind, the result of which intercourse was, a very unfavourable opinion of human nature. He had a dire hatred of all foreign courts, and of politicians in all countries. He thought that foreign potentates in all states were capable of the utmost tyranny and oppression, and that they would employ the worst means to effect their purposes. Though he held the nobility in great contempt, as proud, insolent, ignorant, and unfeeling, yet he confessed that he always felt awe in their presence.

I have been a frequent witness of the awe which he felt before great persons. Once I remember being in a private room of the old opera-house, where his majesty George the Fourth, then Prince of Wales, condescended to permit Dr. Wolcot to be introduced to him. The prince received him in the most gracious manner, and in a short conversation observed, with dignified affability, that he admired his genius, but sometimes thought it ill-directed. The doctor seemed to sink with humility and self-reproach, and made a mumbling, inaudible apology. The prince maintained the same dignified ease and affability, and Wolcot recovered his spirits enough to express his hopes that his royal highness would have less reason hereafter to find fault with his humble muse. Nothing could be more graceful than the manner in which his royal highness took leave of the doctor, who, from that time, never resumed an attack upon the royal family, but transferred all his satirical hostility to the ministers. It was understood that the prince was aware of this meeting, and it was inferred that he thought a courteous rebuke would have a better effect upon the



doctor in checking the license of his pen, than all the severity of the law if it should be called into action against him; and the expedient succeeded.

Another time I was going up the stairs at the same opera-house with the doctor, when we met the late Duke of Cumberland, who with perfect good-humour, said, "How do you do, Pindaricus?" Wolcot felt abashed, but not to the same degree as when before the prince.

I learned from the late Duke of Leeds, with whom I had the honour to be acquainted, that meeting Dr. Wolcot in the green-room of Covent Garden theatre, who had attacked him in one of his poems, the duke addressed him with great courtesy, and desired him to accompany him to his box, and he would introduce him to the duchess. Wolcot could not resist the overture, but went with timid hesitation, and was introduced to the duchess. The duke told me, that in the course of conversation he adverted to the doctor's attack upon him, and said, "But, doctor, if you disapproved of my politics, why did you ridicule my nose—I could not help that?" Wolcot attempted to excuse himself, saying he had heard that his grace had, with other ministers, advised a prosecution against him for the freedom of his pen. The duke assured him he was misinformed, and that he revered the freedom of the press. The doctor was received by the duke and duchess with great courtesy, and they parted in the most amicable manner.

I was first introduced to his grace, when Marquis of Carmarthen, by Dr. Monsey, at his apartments in Chelsea Hospital, and he always saluted me with great kindness from that period till his death. The duke told me that as he was once going down the stairs at St. James's Palace, he saw the celebrated Earl of Bath descending at the same time, and apparently with great pain. The duke, then Lord Osborn, offered his assistance, which the earl accepted; and as they went down the stairs, the latter said, "Thank you, young gentleman, I have more difficulty in getting down these stairs now, than ever I had in getting up them," alluding, of course, to his former political importance.

The Duke of Leeds possessed poetical talents, as was evident in a prologue which he once wrote, and in his *Ex pede Herculem*, which obviously showed that if he had continued to court the muse he would not have wooed in vain. He was one of the best-bred gentlemen I ever knew. I remember when speaking of his grace with the late Mr. Kemble, the latter said the duke always reminded him of the higher characters in Congreve, observing that he had their ease, courtesy, elegance, and sprightliness in his conversation, without any of their licentiousness and occasional grossness.

I have often met his grace in the green-room of Covent Garden theatre, and sometimes he appeared a little under the influence of Bacchus, in consequence, it was said, of the want of domestic felicity; but he never deviated in the slightest degree from his habitual politeness, affability, and good-humour. Never was there a greater con-

trast than between the deportment of his grace and that of the late Marquis of Abercorn, whom I sometimes saw in the same place. The marquis assumed a haughty dignity of demeanour, and looked around as if he thought he disgraced himself by condescending to cast a glance upon any person in the room. The performers, who are never wanting in humour, ridicule, and mimicry, on his departure amply revenged themselves for his indignant neglect by amusing caricatures of his manner. Not so with the Duke of Leeds, who was always treated by them with the most respectful attention, and seemed to raise them in their opinion of themselves by his courteous kindness and unaffected affability.

I once presented to his grace my first metrical production, for I fear to call it poetry, but did not annex my residence to the few original stanzas in manuscript by which it was accompanied; and the next time I had the pleasure of meeting him, he gently rebuked me, and said that if he had known where I lived, he would not have contented himself with writing to me, but would have waited upon me to thank me in person. I lamented my omission, as I should have witnessed a perfect example of good-breeding, and should have profited by the intelligence and abundance of anecdotes that characterized his conversation. His grace frequently invited Mr. Kemble, and other higher actors, to meet several distinguished literary characters at his hospitable mansion.

---

## CHAPTER LII.

MR. WILLIAM WOODFALL. This gentleman, who was one of my early friends, was not more distinguished by his extraordinary memory than by the rectitude and benevolence of his private character. His memory was, indeed, wonderfully accurate and retentive. The public journal which he instituted, and for many years conducted, was rendered so popular by his faithful report of parliamentary debates, that the proprietors of other public journals were obliged to resort to similar means, in order to keep up the comparative credit of their respective papers; but they were obliged also to employ many reporters, in order to sustain any rivalry with Mr. Woodfall in that department of a newspaper. His practice in the House of Commons during a debate was to close his eyes, and to lean with both hands on his stick. He was so well acquainted with the tone and manner of the several speakers, that he only deviated from his customary posture when a new member addressed the house, and having heard his name, he had no subsequent occasion for farther inquiry.

Upon one occasion, some observations were made upon one of Mr. Woodfall's reports in the Court of King's Bench, when Lord Kenyon was chief-justice. In consequence of what the counsel had said on the



report in question, in which a fact of some importance was involved, Lord Kenyon desired to see the newspaper, which was handed to him. After perusing the passage referred to, his lordship inquired if the journalist was the gentleman who was so distinguished for accuracy in reporting debates, and being answered in the affirmative, he said, that he had been so frequent a witness of that gentleman's surprising correctness in reporting debates in the House of Lords, that he was disposed to give implicit credit to his precision in the present instance, and therefore no more was said on the subject.

But what increased the wonder as to the powers of his memory, was his ability to retain a full recollection of any particular debate a fortnight after it had occurred, and during the intervention of many other debates. On such occasions he used to say, that he had placed it in a corner of his mind for future reference. When employed in writing his reports, he was not so absorbed in the subject as to be incapable of playful aberrations, of which I may properly mention an instance, related to me by Mr. John Windus, of the Court of Exchequer.

Mr. Woodfall, on account of his judgment and candour as a dramatic and theatrical critic, and for his zeal in supporting the interests of the drama, was permitted by the theatrical proprietors to write orders for the admission of his friends. Mr. Windus, then a boy, during his school vacation, called on him for the purpose of asking for an order. Mrs. Woodfall told him, that as her husband was then occupied on a very important debate, he could not see him. Mr. Woodfall, however, hearing his voice, called him into his private room and inquired what he wanted. Being told, he said, "Oh, you want an order," and proceeded on his debate. Having reached some period that admitted of a pause, he again asked young Windus what he wanted, and the request being repeated, he uttered the same words and resumed writing the debate. After many repetitions of the same question and answer, Mr. Woodfall took a piece of paper and wrote something to the following effect, addressed to the boy's schoolmaster: "Sir, the bearer is a very bad boy, and I desire you will give him a severe whipping, and place it to the account of yours, Toby Ticklerump." After young Windus had recovered from his surprise, Mr. Woodfall, with his usual kindness, gave the proper order, and returned to his occupation.

This circumstance, however unimportant in itself, is mentioned to show that, in the midst of a labour that might be expected to engross all his mental powers, he was able to indulge a facetious humour. Mr. Windus kept the whimsical order till his riper years, as a singular proof of the intellectual power and playful humour of his early friend.

I was well acquainted with Mr. Woodfall, and can bear a cordial testimony to his moral worth, and the candour and justice of his theatrical criticisms. He always seemed to touch the true points of merit and defects in a drama, or in the performance; but while he proved his judgment, he was always warm in his panegyrics and lenient in his censure. When attending any new drama, or new performer, his

attention seemed by the expression of his features to approach to severity, though there was nothing like it in his heart.

I remember the late Mr. John Kemble, when we were once sitting together at the theatre, bade me observe Mr. Woodfall in one of those serious moods, and said, "How applicable to him is the passage in Hamlet, 'thoughts black, hands apt.'" After conducting "the Morning Chronicle" with a due attention to the course of public events and characters, and without any of that daring scandal, scurrility, and frivolous levity too characteristic of the public prints, as the proprietors of that paper were not capable of properly estimating the value of his talents, and wanted to impose restraints upon his power as editor, he relinquished his connexion with it, and instituted a new daily paper under the title of "The Diary," which he supported by his name and abilities for many years; but as parliamentary debates became the chief objects of public attention, as the rival journals were directed to the same objects, and as he had to contend against a host of reporters, who were able to render the debates as long, and, perhaps, longer than it was possible for his individual efforts to extend them, the success of his new paper did not fulfil his expectations, which induced him to put an end to it.

To show the grateful feelings that animated his heart on the very day in which he terminated the existence of "The Diary," he sent a letter to me, expressing his thanks for the voluntary and gratuitous articles with which I had supplied him for many years, and which on my part were gratifying contributions of friendship to a worthy man, who was always prompt and zealous in the exertion of his talents wherever they could be useful.

Mrs. Woodfall was an excellent wife and mother. There were five sons, and one daughter, all of whom were educated with parental care, and all of whom rewarded that care by their good conduct and their talents. The eldest son, who was sent to the university, and who displayed great abilities, was able to render valuable service to his father's journal, and promised to become eminent at the bar or in the pulpit; but was unfortunately, in the midst of the hopes which his intellectual powers and attainments had excited, seized with a mental malady which totally unfitted him for business, and at length finally obliged the family to place him in a situation appropriated to such melancholy cases.

Mr. Woodfall was a very hospitable character. He possessed a very handsome residence at Kentish Town, which was often the scene of friendship and conviviality. I remember passing a very pleasant day at this mansion. Among the numerous guests on that occasion were the late Mr. Tickel, whose literary and colloquial powers were well known; the late Mr. Richardson, whose literary talents were justly admired for his part in that memorable publication "The Rolliad and the Probationary Odes," which once excited public attention in no slight degree; the late Mr. John Kemble; the late Mr. Perry of "The Morning Chronicle;" Dr. Glover, whose facetious and convivial powers were in high repute; and Francis Const, Esq. The day was



a little interrupted by a short dispute between Mr. Kemble and Mr. Perry, the latter having given an offensive answer to something said by Mr. Kemble. Mr. Kemble looked at him with contempt, and wishing to put an end to the contest, said emphatically, with Zanga, "A lion preys not upon carcasses." This rejoinder roused Mr. Perry, and serious hostilities might have ensued, if Mr. Const and Mr. Richardson had not instantly interposed, and by their friendly and impressive mediation restored peace and good-humour.

The late Mr. Francis Twiss, father of the present Mr. Horace Twiss, by the sister of Mr. Kemble, was also one of the party, and as soon as Mr. Perry arose with an evident hostile spirit, he arose also to support his friend Kemble, and to effect a reconciliation, but his feelings overpowered him, and the work of amity was effectually accomplished by Messrs. Const and Richardson. Care, however, was judiciously taken by Mr. Woodfall to prevent the disputants from returning to town in the same vehicle, lest the contest should be renewed. I returned in the same coach with Mr. Const, Mr. Kemble, and Mr. Twiss, and there was no allusion to the unpleasant controversy in our journey.

Mr. Woodfall had a high idea of the importance of a parliamentary reporter, and when I one day congratulated him on having his elder son in town to assist him, during a very heavy week—"Yes," said he, "and Charles Fox to have a debate on a Saturday!—what! does he think that reporters are made of iron?" There is a ludicrous simplicity in his thus supposing that a great politician, with an object of consequence to his party in view, should have thought of parliamentary reporters.

Mr. Woodfall told me that after Dr. Dodd had been tried and convicted, but not ordered for execution, he sent to request Mr. Woodfall would visit him in Newgate. Mr. Woodfall, who was always ready at the call of distress, naturally supposed the doctor wished to consult him on his situation, or to desire that he would insert some article in his favour in "The Morning Chronicle." On entering the place of confinement, Mr. Woodfall began to condole with him on his unfortunate situation. The doctor immediately interrupted him, and said that he wished to see him on quite a different subject. He then told Mr. Woodfall, that, knowing his judgment on dramatic matters, he was anxious to have his opinion of a comedy which he had written, and if he approved of it, to request his interest with the managers to bring it on the stage. Mr. Woodfall was not only surprised, but shocked, to find the doctor so insensible to his situation, and the more so, because whenever he attempted to offer consolation, the doctor as often said, "Oh! they will not hang me!" while, to aggravate Mr. Woodfall's feelings, he had been informed by Mr. Ackerman, the keeper of Newgate, before his interview with the doctor, that the order for his execution had actually reached the prison. For this extraordinary fact, the reader may confidently rely on the veracity of Mr. Woodfall.\*

\* I once heard the unfortunate doctor preach at the Magdalen Hospital. Presuming upon his importance, he did not arrive till the service was over, and a clergyman

MR. GEORGE WOODFALL. The name of Woodfall will always rank high in my esteem and gratitude, particularly that branch of the family which I now introduce. He was the son of my old friend Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, formerly chief proprietor of "The Public Advertiser;" at that time the principal public journal; and, as a proof of its decided superiority, the vehicle which Junius had preferred to communicate his productions to the world at large. It could not have been merely the high estimation in which "The Public Advertiser" was held at the period in question, which induced him to make this honourable selection, but because he must have known something of the firmness, public spirit, and inflexible integrity of Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall. However that may be, it is certain that though Junius might have known him, he did not know Junius, and hence the preference which Junius gave him is the more honourable to my old friend. But to the credit of Mr. H. S. Woodfall, though it was generally supposed that Junius had intrusted him with his name as well as with his productions, Mr. Woodfall never affected to know the author, directly or indirectly; and I remember when I once met him at dinner at the house of Mr. Harris, the late chief proprietor of Covent Garden theatre, and Junius became the subject of conversation, I observed that Junius must be dead, for that so many topics of constitutional importance had occurred since he last wrote, that he would have been induced to come forward again if he

had entered the pulpit and commenced the sermon. The clergyman, however, resigned his situation as soon as the doctor appeared. His discourse was delivered with energy, but with something theatrical in his action and poetical in his language. Among other passages of a lofty description, I remember he said, that "the man whose life is conducted according to the principles of the Christian religion, will have the satisfaction of an approving conscience and the glory of an admiring God." Dodd published a volume of poems, some of which are in Dodsley's collection. His sermons have a tincture of poetry in the language. I heard him a second time in Charlotte Chapel, Pimlico, and his discourse made the same impression.

It was lamentable to remark the difference between his former deportment in the streets and his appearance in the coach the last time I saw him, when he was going to suffer the sentence of the law. In the streets he walked with his head erect and with a lofty gait, like a man conscious of his own importance, and perhaps of the dignity of his sacred calling. In the coach he had sunk down with his head to the side, his face pale, while his features seemed to be expanded: his eyes were closed, and he appeared a wretched spectacle of despair. The crowd of people in Holborn, where I saw him pass, was immense, and a deep sense of pity seemed to be the universal feeling. I was young and adventurous, or I should not have trusted myself in so vast a multitude; sympathy had repressed every tendency towards disorder, even in so varied and numerous a mass of people.

Dr. Dodd, on the day when he was taken into custody, had engaged to dine with the late Chevalier Ruspini, in Pall Mall. He had arrived some time before the hour appointed, and soon after two persons called and inquired for him, and when he went to them, he was informed that they had come to secure him on a criminal charge. The doctor apologized to the chevalier for the necessity of leaving him so abruptly, and desired that he would not wait dinner for him. Soon after dinner a friend of the chevalier called, and said he had just left the city, and informed the company that Dr. Dodd had been committed to prison on a charge of forgery. I was present at the sale of his effects at his house in Argyle-street. During the sale a large table in the drawing-room was covered with private letters to the doctor, all open, and some signed by many noblemen and distinguished characters. I presume these letters were to be sold in one lot, but I did not stay till the conclusion of the sale.



were alive. Mr. Woodfall then said, "I hope and trust he is not dead, as I think he would have left me a legacy; for though I derived much honour from his preference, I suffered much by the freedom of his pen." These were his very words, and the blunt integrity of his manner fully confirmed his previous declaration, in the same company, that he was really ignorant of the author.

I had been an anonymous correspondent with Mr. H. S. Woodfall some years, merely in gratification of my political principles and feelings, without his knowing from whom he derived my communications; but a youthful messenger whom I once sent with a letter, met him at his own door, and being asked from whom he came, mentioned my name. I then thought it necessary to let him know who was his correspondent, and from that period avowed to him all my humble contributions to his journal.

At a later period I became acquainted with his son, Mr. George Woodfall, the subject of my present notice, who at the period alluded to must have been nearly a boy. However, it has been my good fortune to become intimate with him at his own and other hospitable tables, particularly at that of Mr. Alderman Crowder.

Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall presented to me the first collection of the Works of Junius, corrected by the author, with a kind of inscription from himself; and when his son George brought forth his large edition, in three volumes, including all the private letters of Junius, he paid me the same gratifying compliment. Previous, however, to this compliment, he paid me one much higher, in requesting that I would look over the files of "The Public Advertiser," before the year 1769, in order to see if there were any works of Junius previous to his signature under that name. I did so, and found a letter signed "Publicola," which, in the style and the whole scheme of the composition of Junius, was obviously written by the same hand, though not with the neat and polished language which afterward characterized those letters that excited the attention and admiration of the public, and which will always rank among the chief productions of British literature. There was also a short letter signed Junius, but which Mr. H. S. Woodfall did not include in the first collection.

When, by the treachery of a partner, I was deprived of the property which I had employed a great part of my life in acquiring, and was thrown upon the world at an advanced age, without resource, Mr. George Woodfall, as soon as he heard of my misfortune, desired Mr. Alexander Chalmers to tell me, that if I would publish my poems by subscription, he would print them for me at *cost price*; and, of course, I accepted his generous offer. He, Mr. A. Chalmers, and Mr. William Nicol, the son of my old and worthy friend the late Mr. George Nicol, of Pall Mall, formed a kind of committee, arranged matters, and issued proposals for the publication, and exerted themselves to procure subscribers, after having liberally subscribed themselves. My old friend Mr. Freeling, now Sir Francis, kindly consented to join this amicable committee, but there was no occasion to call him from his important duties. Messrs. Paine and Foss, Long-

man, Rees, Orme, and Co., J. Richardson, and J. Murray, obligingly received subscriptions, and the work was brought forward with all due expedition. One volume only was proposed to the subscribers; but vanity, pride, and folly, which indeed all mean the same thing, tempted me to bring forth all the trifles I had written, and extend it to two, not reflecting that I thereby not only reduced my profits greatly, but gave additional trouble to Mr. George Woodfall, as well as much increased my obligation to him. He, however, in the true spirit of friendship, disregarded the increased trouble and intrusion upon his press, and only regretted, on my account, that I had thus lessened the pecuniary advantage which I might otherwise have derived from so extensive and so honourable a list of subscribers. It remains for me to say, that perhaps a more correct work, so far as relates to typography, never issued from the English or any other press.

To return for a few moments to Junius, a writer who, for his zeal for the British constitution, and the spirit and elegance with which he defended it, deserves to be classed among its strongest champions; it must be acknowledged that he was inconsistent and cruel in the manner in which he mentioned our revered sovereign George the Third. Sometimes Junius speaks of that amiable monarch as possessing the best of hearts, and sometimes as one of the basest men in the kingdom; though he was unable to bring any positive charge against the king, that, if justly founded, was not rather applicable to his ministers.

George the Third was a quiet, domestic, and benignant monarch. He was fond of the fine arts, and was a liberal patron of them. To his liberality we owe the Royal Academy, to which we are indebted for that progress in national taste which has rendered the British school of painting superior to that of any other country. He was accused of being obstinate with respect to the American war; but that reputed obstinacy may more justly be considered as a true sense of the dignity of his crown, and firmness in supporting it, that he might maintain the honour of the empire, and transmit it unimpaired to his successors. I heard the great Lord Chatham say in the House of Lords on this subject, as I have mentioned in another place, addressing the advocates for American independence, "Would you disinherit the Prince of Wales of his legitimate possessions?" And surely his majesty had a right to try to retain the full extent of his dominions. What would the world have thought, and what would history have said, if George the Third had surrendered America without a struggle, to a set of men who at that period appeared to be only a band of ambitious demagogues, who made their opposition to the government at home the ground of their own aspirations to lead in a republic? Granting that it was a hopeless attempt to recover the submission of the American colonies, still that attempt was the act of his ministers, and they are not very sound statesmen who can only form their judgments when the events are before them. But this important question is now effectually settled. America seems to be



under a wise and resolute government, which, however, no political sagacity could possibly anticipate or predict; and it is probable that both countries will be benefited by the separation, while they exist in independence and in friendship with each other. I therefore cannot but condemn Junius for his virulence and gross personality against a monarch, who, feeling the dignity of his station, was anxious to support and to retain the whole of his empire, for the advantage of his country as well as from his own conscientious sense of duty, and also as a monarch to whom was intrusted the honour and welfare of his empire.

Junius was, therefore, in a dilemma, for if he thought that the ministers acted solely according to the uncontrollable will of the monarch, his attacks should have been confined to the monarch; but if he thought that the monarch, whose private virtues he acknowledged, submitted to the judgment and discretion of his ministers, his censure should wholly have been addressed to them. But the wisest men are limited in their faculties, and can only act according to existing circumstances and probable prospects; and that consideration will excuse, if not justify, the opposition to American independence.

There is this insuperable obstacle in the way of all attempts to discover the author of Junius: he says, "I am the sole depository of my own secret, and *it shall perish with me.*" Therefore, if he were to avow himself, he could not expect to be credited, and nothing but a succession of letters, written with equal spirit, vigour, knowledge, and satirical severity, could support his pretensions. My friend Mr. Richardson informed me that Charles Fox and Mr. Sheridan thought lightly of Junius, and said that there was as good writing every day in the newspapers. The public evidently think otherwise; for, though the reputation of these celebrated compositions has been assigned to many individuals, public confidence has not been attached to any of them.

My friend Dr. Kelly, of Finsbury-square, published a tract, in order to prove that Burke was the author, and cited many parallel passages from acknowledged works of Burke, comparing them with extracts from Junius, yet they are not of so striking a similarity as to decide the question. Junius, in recommending a union among the opponents of government who had differences among themselves, says, "I would accept a simile from Mr. Burke, and a sarcasm from Colonel Barry." This was written while Mr. Burke was in the zenith of his reputation, and can it then be supposed that if he were Junius, he would have mentioned himself in a manner bordering on contempt, as if he could offer nothing better than a simile as an orator and a politician? As to the opinion of Charles Fox and Mr. Sheridan respecting the merit of the letters, even granting that the public journals contain productions of great excellence, which cannot, indeed, be denied, yet it must be admitted that Junius set the example of a style which improved the English language, and has been imitated by most succeeding writers on similar topics.

It has been said that Dr. Johnson gave a dignity to the language;

but it may be justly observed, that his style has never been imitated in the same degree as that of Junius, and has even been often charged with being pompous, turgid, inflated, and disproportionate to the sentiments which he intended to express. Dr. Johnson's remark, that in Junius there was more of the venom of the shaft than the vigour of the bow, is not an accurate description, for it is hardly possible for language to be stronger than that of Junius, when he puts forth all his vigour. It has been observed that Junius never attacked Dr. Johnson, and from his silence in that respect, it has been inferred that Burke was the author, and, therefore, spared Dr. Johnson as a friend; but Burke was so irritable a man that he would have spared nobody, even as an avowed author. The violence and virulence of his temper were evident in his separation from Charles Fox, with whom he had for many years been upon terms of the closest intimacy and friendship, though Fox was so affected as to shed tears on the occasion; and Burke afterward wrote a pamphlet against Fox, accusing him of treason, on the subject of Mr. Adair's mission to Russia, as the imputed ambassador to the empress from Charles Fox and his party.

But with respect to the forbearance of Junius towards Dr. Johnson, it may reasonably be supposed that he alluded to Johnson when he mentioned "the learned dulness of declamation," and had no occasion to appear in more direct opposition to the great moralist and politician; if he had attacked him, however, it is by no means probable that he would have sunk under the weight of the ponderous lexicographer.

It has been said that it was in the power of Burke to imitate any style, and his pamphlet in the manner of Lord Bolingbroke has been mentioned as affording a proof that he was master of the language, and could therefore easily assume that of Junius; but it was not so much the language of Lord Bolingbroke that he imitated, as his lordship's mode of reasoning, for there is not so marked a character in his style as in his argument and the general tendency of his compositions. Perhaps, too, if Burke's pamphlet had not been brought forward as an avowed resemblance of the manner of Lord Bolingbroke, it never would have appeared in that light to the public. Besides, when Junius wrote his first letter, which bears no resemblance to the style of Burke, he had no reason to apprehend that he should be drawn into a controversy which would render it necessary for him to conceal himself from the world at large, and oblige him to assume a style different from his own, as would have been the case if Burke had been the author. "Style," says Gibbon, "is the image of character," and Burke's natural style was too diffuse, flowery, and metaphorical to represent such a character as might be supposed to attach to Junius, who is shrewd, compact, neat, and pointed.

But of all the absurd attempts to discover Junius, that of Mr. Philip Thicknesse was the most hopeless and improbable, who published a pamphlet to prove that Mr. Horne Tooke was the author, as if Mr. Horne Tooke would assume an anonymous character to



triumph over himself: to say nothing of the laboured accuracy of his style compared with that of Junius, besides many other considerations that must occur to every reflecting mind. I have mentioned in another place that Mr. Horne Tooke told me that he knew the author of Junius thirty years after Junius ceased to write, and when he could hardly have had any reason for concealment.

My old friend Mr. Boaden, a gentleman well known and justly respected in the literary world, has devoted much attention to the subject of Junius, and at one time was disposed to give the palm to Mr. Gibbon, and has cited many passages from both writers which bear a strong resemblance to each other. Mr. Boaden addressed the late Lord Sheffield in a letter, and cited those parallel passages. His lordship returned a very polite answer, but, though he differed from Mr. Boaden, and intimated that he knew Mr. Gibbon was not Junius, yet his lordship did not offer any strong reason to support his positive negation. That Mr. Gibbon had a power of sarcasm and a force of eloquence sufficient to justify Mr. Boaden's surmise, is evident; but considering the benevolence of Mr. Gibbon's character, and the suavity of his manner, it may be doubtful whether he would ever have written with the virulence and asperity which may often be discovered in the letters of Junius.

I attended the late Dr. William Hunter's lectures on anatomy at the same time that Mr. Gibbon and Dr. Adam Smith were fellow-pupils, and heard much of the conversation which passed between the former and Dr. Hunter; for Mr. Gibbon, at the end of every lecture, used to leave his seat to thank the doctor for the pleasure and instruction which he had received. The mild, courteous, polite, and affable manners which Mr. Gibbon on these occasions manifested, were very different from those which may be supposed to have animated the mind of Junius; to say nothing of the piety of Junius occasionally, which will hardly be attributed to the skeptical historian.

---

### CHAPTER LIII.

THOUGH I have mentioned Mr. Sheridan under a particular head, yet as I write without method, and as matters casually occur to my memory, I shall insert them as they present themselves. If I did not seize these scattered recollections, they would perhaps never recur.

Mr. Sheridan was one of our great men, and will not only live in dramatic annals, but be recorded in the history of the country. His errors as well as his good qualities should be known, that they who may emulate his merits may also avoid his faults. He is a proof how a mind originally proud, delicate, and honourable, may be warped and injured by adversity, which often sours the temper and corrupts

the heart. Almost all his errors may be imputed to his necessities, which destroyed the balance of his mind. His talents raised him into a rank which he had not the means of supporting. When sober, he was cheerful and good-humoured. When he had drunk too much, he sometimes became misanthropic, splenetic, ready, and almost eager, to offend. Our mutual friend, Joe Richardson, who was a penetrating observer, and knew Sheridan better than anybody, said that in his sullen fits he "would search his mind for the bitterest things that he could conceive," and freely give vent to them against the person at whom his temporary pique, or rather anger, might be directed. But this was the result of those pecuniary difficulties which compelled his pride to submit to obligation.

I will only mention one instance of this unfortunate disposition, which occurred at a time of convivial excess, that happened at Kelly's saloon in Pall Mall, which Kelly kindly concealed, but which I learned from Richardson. On this occasion he had taken offence against the late Mr. John Kemble, and had assailed him in the most bitter manner. Kemble had borne this venomous hostility for some time with great patience, and had pushed round the bottle in hopes that Sheridan might be tempted to drink away his anger; but finding that, as the lion lashes himself into fury, so Sheridan's rancour seemed to increase, unable to bear the provocation any longer, Kemble seized a decanter and threw it at Sheridan, who luckily turned his head aside and escaped a blow which might otherwise have been fatal. The company then interfered, Sheridan apologized for his ill-humour, and as they were really both liberal-minded and good-natured men, they went out soon after in perfect amity together.

Sheridan was indeed good-natured, and if he had been a man of fortune would not only have been a man of nice honour, as Richardson said of him, but have been a liberal patron and a generous friend. I met him one day while the naval mutiny spread a general alarm, when Mr. Canning had styled him the "glorious exception" from the revolutionary principles of his party; and, alluding to his conduct in parliament, which had procured him this honourable distinction, he said, "Well, Taylor, though our politics differ, what do you think of me now?" "Why," said I, "it is possible for people to condemn in public what they privately encourage." "Now," said he, "that's very unhandsome." "What!" rejoined I, "you, the great wit of the age, not take a joke?" "Oh," said he, recovering his good-humour in a moment, "a joke, is it? Well, it is, however, the dullest I ever heard, and I am sorry you have no better, but I shall be glad to see you at Polesden."

Having been annoyed by the appearance of flying spots on the paper when he read or wrote, he sent to me, requesting that I would call on him and give him my opinion upon the subject. As I was going I met Mr. Courteney, the Irish wit, who was long the Momus of the House of Commons. Hearing I was going to look at Sheridan's eyes, he asked the reason. I told him that Sheridan complained of flying spots before them, which were called "*muscæ-volantes*."



"No," said Mr. Courteney, "with Sheridan they should be called *vino-volantes*."

Mr. Sheridan asked me one morning to attend the rehearsal of Hamlet by Mr. Foote, a nephew of my old friend Jessé Foote, the popular surgeon. I went to the theatre and concealed myself in one of the upper boxes until the rehearsal ended, and then joined Mr. Sheridan on the stage. I afterward wrote an introductory address for Mr. Foote. Mr. Foote, as well as I can recollect, recited the first speech of Richard the Third, and was kindly encouraged by Mr. Sheridan. In the course of conversation, I asked Mr. Sheridan what he thought of Garrick's Richard. He said it was very fine, but in his opinion not terrible enough. I mentioned this opinion to Mrs. Siddons, and she exclaimed, "Good God! what could be more terrible?" She then told me, that when she was rehearsing the part of Lady Anne to Garrick's Richard, in the morning, he desired that when at night he led her from the sofa, she would follow him step by step, as he said he did a great deal with his face, and wished not to turn it from the audience; but such was the terrific impression which his acting produced upon her, that she was too much absorbed to proceed, and obliged him, therefore, to turn his back, on which he gave her such a terrible frown, that she was always disturbed when she recollected it.

During the agitation of the first Regency bill, when Lord Loughborough so unluckily involved the opposition in legal difficulty, which the presence of mind and sound wisdom of Mr. Pitt rendered insuperable, I became, by a circumstance of some importance in the political world at that time, the conductor of "The Morning Post." It appeared that a lady, supposed to be in great favour with a high personage, and not merely connected by the *ties of mutual affection*, had determined to assert claims not sanctioned by law, but which, if openly developed, or rather promulgated, would, perhaps, have been attended by a national agitation. It was stated in "The Morning Post," rather as rumour than assertion, that the lady in question had demanded a peerage and 6000*l.* a year, as a requital for her suppression of a fact which might have excited alarm over the empire, and have put an effectual stop to all farther proceedings on the subject of the pending regency.

I was engaged merely as the dramatic critic for "The Morning Post" at that time, and was on intimate terms with a confidential servant of the high personage alluded to. This confidential servant sent to me, and when I went to him he assured me that there was not the least foundation for the paragraph in question, and requested that I would convey this assurance to the person who had *farmed* the paper from the chief proprietor. I told him I was convinced that such a communication would have no effect, or rather a contrary effect, for that, finding the subject had made an impression, it would certainly be followed by articles of the same nature and tendency, and that silence was the best policy. The person alluded to did not seem to be convinced by my reasoning, and determined to consult people

more likely to form a better judgment; yet he desired me in the mean time to convey the assurance which he had given. I did so, and, as I expected, there was next day a stronger allusion to the same mysterious and alarming event. The same confidential agent, then satisfied of the propriety of the advice which I had first given, asked me if I thought that the *farmer* of the paper, who was also a proprietor, would dispose of the period for which he was authorized to conduct it, and of his share in the paper; and I was desired to make the requisite inquiry. I did so, and as the *farmer* possessed no literary talents, and "The Morning Post" had sunk under his management into a very different state from its present fashionable interest and political importance, he was glad of the opportunity of relieving himself from a weight which he had not strength enough to carry. He, therefore, struck the iron while it was hot, received a large sum for his share of the paper, another for the time that he was to hold a control over it, and an annuity for life. Such was the importance attached to this mysterious secret: "The Morning Post" was purchased for the allotted period, and I was vested with the editorship. I may here mention a circumstance that illustrates the character, or rather the opinion of Dr. Wolcot. When the confidential agent to whom I have alluded first communicated to me the extravagant claims of the lady in question, and the public commotion which she was likely to occasion if she persevered in her pretensions; the doctor, who was present, laughed, and said, "Oh! there is no reason to be alarmed, the matter is easily settled." When I asked him what was to be done, his answer was, "Why poison her." "What!" said I, "doctor, commit murder?" "Murder!" rejoined he, "there is nothing in it; it is state policy, and is always done." Though the doctor said this with jocularly, yet such was the impression that history had made on his mind, and such his opinion of all foreign courts, that having very unfavourable ideas of mankind in general, he might indeed impute the probability of such a practice to our own court. He certainly had no intention to suggest such an expedient upon the present occasion; but if there was any temptation for a joke, it was impossible for him to resist it.

I held the situation of editor for about two years, as far as I can recollect; but as the chief proprietor, from whom it had been farmed, not only disapproved of my editorship, but, as he said, "thought I had not devil enough for the conduct of a public journal," and frequently expressed his discontent, and as the great business which had occasioned the purchase had passed by, I signified my readiness to relinquish the management, and two young Irishmen were introduced as my successors. Knowing the dashing spirit of the Irish character, I advised the printer, who received a weekly sum to be responsible for the contents of the paper, to be careful what he inserted. He assured me with thanks that he should be cautious; but the result was, that soon after he was confined in Newgate during twelve months for the insertion of a libel, and an action was brought against the proprietor himself for another on a lady of quality, which subjected him to three thousand pounds damages, and enormous law expenses. He then, I



heard, in the bitterness of his heart, lamented that he "had ever parted with Mr. Taylor." To add to his misfortune, the lady in question subsequently gave occasion to a suspicion that the original charge against her was not without foundation. Whether, with a due sense of morality, he regretted more her imputed desertion from virtue than the loss of his money, I never thought it necessary to inquire.

As to the mysterious transaction which led to this extraordinary purchase, it indeed was understood, that the distinguished female in question received a recompense for withholding her demands adequate to the full extent of her ambitious pretensions. It may amuse the reader to say a few words more respecting the proprietor of "The Morning Post," who disgusted me so much as to induce me to resign a profitable engagement, because my conduct of the paper was contrary to his opinions, if he was able to form any.

It was urged in mitigation of damages in his defence to the action brought against him for the libel on the lady of quality, that he never interfered in the management of the paper, but purchased a share in it, merely as he would do to farm the post-horse duties, or to be concerned in any mercantile speculation. The truth however is, that he was always interfering, and before the time that I have mentioned as having myself been appointed the editor, the person to whom he had surrendered the whole control of the paper had employed the Rev. Mr. Jackson, afterward so well known, and who was tried in Dublin for treasonable practices, to write the leading articles for "The Morning Post." Mr. Jackson was a very able writer, and gave such a variety to his political compositions as rendered them very amusing, as well as expressive. He generally wrote in a very large hand, upon very large sheets of paper, which appeared like maps, or atlases spread over the table. The proprietor in question, unexpectedly entering the room one evening, suddenly retreated in dismay, and afterward observed that Mr. Jackson should be dismissed, otherwise he would ruin the property by the vast quantity of paper which he consumed in writing his political articles.

He had been prepared with a lesson to complain of my management of the paper, but unluckily had not memory sufficient to retain his task. Among other complaints, he told me that the paper was wholly confined to politics, and had none of those little *antidotes* which had before diverted the readers. The poor, or rather, indeed, rich man, had doubtless *anecdotes* strongly impressed upon his mind, but not understanding the meaning of the word, it is not wonderful that he should have forgotten the sound. His late majesty, when Prince of Wales, once dined with this person at his country-seat, and having observed that the wine was very good, "Yes," said his wise landlord, "it is very good, but I have better in my cellar." "Oh!" said the prince, "then I suppose you keep it for better company." This rebuke, however, was quite unintelligible to "mine host," who did not think of sending for a bottle of his superior vintage.

While I conducted "The Morning Post," the evenings passed pleasantly at the office. Dr. Wolcot was a constant visiter, and generally

wrote some whimsical articles for the paper. Mr. Merry, generally known by his poetical designation of Della Crusca, was a frequent visitor, and he and I used to scribble verses in conjunction. Mr. Billington also, the first husband of the celebrated syren, a man of great humour, often enlivened the society by humorous remarks, and anecdotes of the musical and fashionable circles. Yet the business of the paper was not neglected, for I have often remained at the office till three o'clock, to revise, correct, and guard against the accidental insertion of any improper article, moral or political.

I endeavoured all I could to procure a regular salary for Dr. Wolcot, having a high opinion of his inventive powers and humour, but the surly proprietor was taught to be afraid of the freedom of his muse. I even offered the doctor half of my weekly salary, but neither his pride nor his delicacy would permit him to assent, and he still supplied his gratuitous effusions, chiefly of the poetical kind. We were plentifully supplied with punch, the doctor's favourite beverage, and as far as our limited party admitted, the meeting might be considered as Comus's court. This literary and convivial revelry continued nearly to the end of the two years during which I held the editorship of "The Morning Post." Here I feel myself under the painful necessity of mentioning my quondam friend Merry in a manner unfavourable to his character, and distressing to my feelings, as notwithstanding his treatment of me, I really regarded him almost as a brother, and still feel towards him an affectionate regret.

He had requested me to endeavour to induce the late Mr. Harris, then chief proprietor of Covent Garden theatre, to renew his wife's engagement. Mr. Harris said that he should be very glad to re-engage her at his theatre, but that he was persuaded he should be subject to attacks from her husband in the newspapers, unless she was allowed to perform every character she liked, and to be provided with the most expensive dresses. He desired me to get him out of the dilemma, which he deemed the application to be, and to say that his company was too abundantly supplied with performers in general to admit of any more. I endeavoured to satisfy Merry with this answer, but in vain; he expressed much discontent with the rejection of the lady, and I have reason to believe that Mr. Harris was in consequence the subject of his newspaper hostility.

When this negotiation failed, Mr. Merry requested that I would write to Mr. Stephen Kemble, who was related to me by marriage, and then the manager of the theatre at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and try to procure an engagement for Mrs. Merry. I did so, but, pending this new negotiation, there appeared in an obscure evening newspaper called "The Telegraph, and long since defunct, a violent attack upon me, not mentioning my name, but alluding to me in my profession of oculist. The cause of this attack was an account of the representation of "Venice Preserved," which vehemently censured the democratical principles that were inculcated by Pierre and his fellow-reformers. This account appeared in a daily paper, also now



defunct, entitled "The True Briton," of which I was then a proprietor.

Merry perhaps suspected that the account was written by me, but if so he was mistaken, for though I was one of the proprietors of the paper, the conductor at that time was the late John Gifford, Esq., afterward one of the police magistrates. Conscious of my integrity, and not ashamed of my attachment to the political principles and judicious administration of the glorious William Pitt, I did not think it necessary to take any notice of the anonymous libel ; but many of my friends thought otherwise, and observed, that if I remained wholly silent, I should be thought to acquiesce in the truth of the charges. I therefore applied by letter to the editor of the paper, an Irishman named M'Donnell, whom I had known before, requiring the name of the author, expressing my suspicion that the libel upon me had been written by a known defamatory author of that time. M'Donnell affected to consider it as an insult that I supposed he could be acquainted with such a character as I described, and therefore replied that the matter ought now to be settled between him and me. Considering this hostile intimation as an attempt to evade my farther endeavours to discover the writer, I laughed at his implied proposition, and assured him that I should resort to the law, not to the field, for a decision. Finding me resolute, he relaxed from his martial menaces, was very civil, and assured me that before the end of a month I should know the author.

Previous to this application, as M'Donnell had entered the Temple as a barrister, I examined the entry to procure his Christian name, that I might be prepared for a prosecution, and in my letter, I addressed him to the full extent of his Christian and surname, to alarm him as to the possible consequences. To my utter astonishment, at the end of about a week, I received a letter from Merry, acknowledging himself to be the author of the libel upon the man who at that very time was endeavouring to serve him by procuring an engagement for his wife. I received this acknowledgment rather "in sorrow than in anger," and admiring Merry for his genius, his humour, and his learning, thought of taking no other notice of his letter than to show it to our mutual friends for my own justification. I may as well, however, insert the libel, in order to show the full extent of treachery, malice, and ingratitude, which characterized the whole transaction.

"A QUERY.—Who is the man that can violate every principle of private confidence ? Who is the man that can sacrifice every principle of public virtue to the most sordid self-interest ? Who is the man that, without remorse, can disturb the tranquillity of domestic happiness ? Who is the man that, without mercy or common decency, can wound the peace of every honest individual ? Who is the man that is false to his friends, inimical to the *liberties* of his country, the slanderer of all *merit*, the panegyrist of all *infamy* ? Who is the most *venal*, the most *shameless*, the most *savage* of mankind ? The

enemy of *hope*, the advocate of *despair*? IT IS THE REPTILE OCULIST. *Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane cave!*"

I revive this elaborate and atrocious libel, because I am conscious that it is in every point wholly inapplicable to me, and because it is a striking illustration of the malignity to which human nature may be reduced. While Merry was a man of fortune, which was before I knew him, I have heard from good judges that he was liberal, open-hearted, and benevolent; but he had exhausted his fortune, and it was said that he was chiefly supported by an English lady of quality in Florence, till the lady had formed a connexion with a person of high rank.

Merry was in France during the most frantic period of the French revolution, and had imbibed all the levelling principles of the most furious democrat; having lost his fortune, and in despair, he would most willingly have promoted the destruction of the British government, if he could have entertained any hopes of profiting in the general scramble for power.

To resume my story. In consequence of the apprehension of legal punishment for this unprovoked and malignant libel, the following article was inserted in "The Telegraph:"—"An article appeared in this paper of the fourth instant, under the title of a Query, describing, in the grossest terms, the gentleman against whom it was directed. Those who know the hurry with which a newspaper is made up, will allow for the accidental insertion of offensive matter; and as such was the case in that instance, we have no hesitation in expressing our regret that the article in question was admitted, as we are fully convinced the gentleman alluded to is not a proper object for such an attack." This article appeared in "The Telegraph" of the 23d of November, 1795. On the 30th of the same month, to my utter astonishment, I received the following letter from Mr. Merry, the last man on earth whom I should have suspected of having written the libel in question.

"TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Mr. M—— (M'Donnell) has informed me that you impute to me a paragraph which appeared some time ago in "The Telegraph." I will be candid with you and explain the matter. We had been drinking a great deal of wine, and in fact I was drunk. When "The True Briton" was produced, in which were some very cruel and malignant attacks on Mr. Barnes, Mr. Bannister, and another, the intent of which appeared to strike at the life of the first-mentioned gentleman, and at the professional interest of the latter, it was absolutely affirmed that you were the author. In consequence, the obnoxious paragraph was produced, and I own that, heated as I was with wine, my indignation got the better of every other consideration, and I was *aiding* and *abetting* in the composition of the same. I really, however, never felt more hurt or confounded than when I saw it on the following day—and being now perfectly convinced that you were not



the author of the paragraph which had so exasperated us, I do most willingly and sincerely beg your pardon for the part I took in the transaction, and hope you will forgive me, and endeavour to forget it. You cannot suppose that I could wish to hurt you in any way, *as I have never received any unkindness from you ; on the contrary, have always found you ready to do me any good office in your power.* I again repeat, that I am truly concerned at what has happened, and that I never will be induced to act in any manner by you but as your friend and well-wisher. Believe me, I feel the truest regard for you, and am sincerely and affectionately yours,

" R. M.

" November 30, 1795."

In the first place, it is proper to observe, that a letter from the editor of "The Telegraph" assured me that he received the libel in question not from a *party*, as Mr. Merry's letter imports, but from *an individual*. In the next, that I knew nothing of the Mr. Barnes mentioned in the letter, but remember that a person of that name had been suspected of having fired an air-gun at our revered monarch George the Third, about that period. As to Mr. Bannister (junior), I had the pleasure to be acquainted with him early in life, and was so zealous in supporting him, that his father never met me without saying, "I am at all times glad to see you, as you have been always Jack's friend." Finally, I repeat, that I was not the author of the paragraph that Mr. Merry states to have been the cause of his furious attack upon me.

What adds to the wonder of this extraordinary transaction, a short time before, at Mr. Merry's desire, I wrote the prologue to his tragedy entitled "Lorenzo," to preserve the memory of our friendship, and, to use his own words, "that we might go down to posterity together." I had determined to take no notice of Mr. Merry's letter, but meeting my old and valued friend Sir William Beechey, at the house of the late Mr. George Dance, architect and R.A., Sir William strenuously advised me to publish it in defence of my character. I did so, with an account of the whole transaction, which I circulated among my friends. After this publication I received another letter from Mr. Merry, soliciting a renewal of our intercourse, and that we might "shake hands in amity." Of this letter of course I took no notice, but had soon after the mortification of seeing him on the opposite side of the way in Marlborough-street, looking at me as he passed with the aspect of dejection and dismay.

Poor Merry, I was proud of his friendship ! When I review what I have written respecting him, I cannot but apprehend that I may be thought to harbour too much resentment against an old friend, for whom I have acknowledged that I felt a sincere regard as well as admiration ; but his anonymous attack upon me was so bitter, so minute, and so comprehensive, that I cannot but fear also it may have had some effect upon my character with those who do not know me, and though conscious of integrity, and "a conscience void of

offence," yet I am by no means indifferent to reputation. On such occasions, therefore, self-defence I consider as a duty which I owe to the world at large, particularly as during my long life I have been generally known.

To show the regard which I felt for Merry, I will introduce a few stanzas from a poem which I addressed to him, in order to attract public attention to his tragedy of "Lorenzo," which was soon after represented at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. After noticing in my poem many of his productions, and praising them highly, I concluded with the following stanzas :

Say, dost thou, fondly charmed along  
By Fancy's wild and witching song,  
With moon-light shadows seek repose,  
The world forgetting and its woes ?

Does sorrow linger o'er thy lyre,  
And sadly chill the conscious wire ?  
Does love the pensive hour invade,  
And absence veil the darling maid ?

Has malice, perfidy, or pride,  
Struck deep in friendship's bleeding side ?  
Long since thy piercing eye could scan  
"The low ingratitude of man."\*

Lo ! Fame her fairest wreath assigns,  
While Love delighted chants thy lines,  
Oh ! then resume thy melting song,  
And charm the willing world along.

Fortunately for my reputation, I have the testimony of many in my favour, as I may subsequently show, and among others, the following inscription in a volume entitled "The Beauties of the Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner," a work instituted by the late Mr. Canning, of which he and my late friend Mr. William Gifford were the chief writers, and the latter was the editor. On the close of "The Anti-Jacobin Examiner," Mr. John Gifford, the magistrate, was favoured with all the unprinted manuscripts intended for that work, which was only to last during the pending session of parliament, and upon those manuscripts Mr. John Gifford founded "The Anti-Jacobin Magazine," which he conducted with great vigour on true constitutional principles. He, however, selected and published the beauties of the former work, and the volume which he sent to me contained the following inscription in his own handwriting.

"TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

"From the Editor, with the best wishes that the sincerest friendship can suggest, and the most benevolent of hearts excite."

\* A line in one of Merry's poems.



Mr. John Gifford was the author of "A History of France," some admirable "Letters to the Earl of Lauderdale" during the French revolution, "The Life of Mr. Pitt," in six volumes, and many other political works of great merit. In "The Anti-Jacobin Review," there appeared a very severe note upon Dr. Wolcot. Not knowing that there were two Mr. Giffords, and confused between "The Anti-Jacobin Examiner" and "The Anti-Jacobin Review," the doctor thought that the bitter note was written by Mr. William Gifford, and therefore proceeded with great haste to the shop of Mr. Wright, the bookseller, in Piccadilly, which Mr. W. Gifford was in the habit of frequenting. The doctor, on entering, observing Gifford, whose person he had seen before, said, "Are you Mr. Gifford?" and without waiting for an answer, struck him immediately on the head. Gifford was strong in the arm, wrested the weapon from him, and struck him in return; a scuffle ensued, and the doctor lost his hat and wig, which were thrown to him after he had been pushed into the street.

I passed the house soon after this fracas had happened, and saw some drops of blood upon the shop-window, which I was told were the effects of Mr. Gifford's blow. The doctor, however, though he "lost some claret," to use the technical term of the *Fancy*, received no essential injury. This violent contest induced Mr. Gifford to write his severe poem, addressed to Peter Pindar; and also Dr. Alexander Geddes, a poet and a scholar, to publish a poem, entitled "The Battle of the Bards." Dr. Geddes published a translation, rather of a doggrel kind, of Horace, and a specimen of a translation of the Bible, in which he introduced some modern phrases, such as that Jephtha's daughter was a "fine girl," and others of an equally familiar description. I afterward explained to Dr. Wolcot his mistake in confounding the two Giffords, and attacking the wrong one. When the matter was understood by both parties, all enmity was at an end. I succeeded in making them send amicable inquiries as to the health of each other, which I conveyed with pleasure, as I did between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Jerminham, who had written against each other.

---

## CHAPTER LIV.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR YORKE. The early elevation of this eminent lawyer to the highest legal office in the British empire, and the loss which the nation suffered by his death soon after his appointment, gave occasion to some unfounded surmises and malignant rumours, which, no doubt, derived additional strength and currency from an implied charge on his majesty George the Third, brought by Junius, and which at the time gained a degree of credit with the public at large. Junius, referring to these rumours, in a

note to his thirty-sixth letter, addressed to the Duke of Grafton, seems to admit them as well-founded, and promises to give the particulars of the supposed transaction, but he did not keep that promise; and as it cannot be imagined that Junius wanted information, or that his vindictive spirit was softened by time, it may fairly be inferred that he thought the rumours alluded to were false and malevolent. If so, it was his duty to acquit the injured monarch of the charge which he had rashly brought against him. These rumours were, however, revived a few years ago; and, therefore, the sons of the lamented lord-chancellor came forward, under the natural impulse of duty and reverence, to vindicate the memory of their honoured father. As the subject is interesting, and may give occasion to erroneous statements, or mysterious insinuations, in the history of the reign of his majesty George the Third, I feel it a duty of respect to the memory of that revered monarch, as well as of esteem for Admiral Sir Joseph Yorke, with whom I have for many years had the pleasure of being acquainted, to extract the following letter from the transitory columns of a public journal into these humble pages.

“TO THE EDITOR OF ‘THE MORNING CHRONICLE.’

“SIR,

“IT has only this day come to our knowledge, that a paragraph has appeared in your paper of Thursday last, part of which is stated to have been taken from a book lately published, entitled “Parkes’s History of the Court of Chancery” (which neither ourselves, nor, as we believe, any of our friends have hitherto seen), purporting to relate to circumstances supposed to have attended the death of our father, Mr. Charles Yorke, in January, 1770. It would be quite in vain, and useless in these days to complain of the publication of anecdotes of such a nature as this, after the lapse of nearly sixty years, calculated in the highest degree to wound the feelings of individuals and of whole families, without any attempt being made to ascertain the truth or falsehood, accuracy or inaccuracy, of the facts brought forward; and still less of the insertion, by the editors of the daily papers, of articles of intelligence borrowed from books which have passed through the press. We have, therefore, no complaint to make of such an insertion by them, as far as they copy from the books; the authors of which are, of course, to be considered as responsible for what they have published. We think, however, that we have a *claim* on the *justice* of editors of the public papers, as having now given a far greater degree of publicity to a story which (but for its insertion in them) might have remained almost unnoticed, to give an equal degree of publicity to this our formal contradiction of it, when we state that the paragraph mentioned is a most false, scandalous, and malignant calumny. But in particular, that part of it which contains an attack, at once so cruel and unmanly, on the memory of our late ever-to-be-lamented and honoured mother, is false and malignant in the highest degree. The lady thus libelled died a few years ago, at the age of eighty, respected by all who knew her. Providentially,



she had been withdrawn to a better world before such a vile and atrocious calumny appeared, or the knowledge of it must have killed her. Providentially, many still exist who well know the superior excellence of her character and principles; and that she was wholly incapable of contemplating, even in idea, the possibility of such an action as that she has been charged with; who also know the fact, that when, after the fate of her ever-regretted husband, she was earnestly solicited, and pressed to assent to the completion of the peerage intended for him, and which had passed through all the forms, except only the affixing the great seal, she positively refused it, and would never suffer the offer to be repeated to her.

"London, Sunday evening,  
"May 11.

"C. P. YORKE.  
"J. YORKE."

**THE LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.** It is with no slight degree of pleasure that I include this venerable prelate among the number of my esteemed friends; his character is so highly rated for his learned theological works, that he may be considered as a distinguished pillar of the established church. I had the pleasure of knowing him about the year 1778, when I was introduced to him by his college friend, Joseph Richardson, so well known in the literary and political circles at a subsequent period. Another college friend I was introduced to at the same time, the Rev. Edward Robson.

Mr. Herbert Marsh, the present Bishop of Peterborough, was then distinguished for his pleasant spirit and good-humour, and I lost sight of him for many years, but with Joe Richardson and Ned Robson I retained an intimacy till death deprived me of the friendship of both. Mr. Robson possessed literary talents, and was a good poet. Before I knew him, he had been chaplain to a nobleman whose name I do not recollect; finding that the daughter of this nobleman had conceived a partiality for him, he deemed it proper to resign his chaplaincy, that he might not be thought to give encouragement to the lady's favourable sentiments. When I first knew him, he was curate to Dr. Markham, the rector of Whitechapel church, and though he was upon the most friendly footing with the doctor, and dined with him almost every day, the doctor paid him the respect of sending a formal invitation every morning, which perhaps Mr. Robson, who was not without a sense of personal dignity, had deemed necessary.

For many years, till I first entered into the marriage state, in the year 1788, I was in the habit of breakfasting every Monday morning with Mr. Robson, who then lived in Whitechapel, and I in Hatton Garden. Some days, after he had discharged his clerical duties, we passed the day together, dined in the vicinity of Covent Garden, and closed the evening at one of the theatres. I was indebted to him for much amusement and instruction, and of course feel a sincere respect for his memory. During this time Mr. Robson was appointed one of the magistrates of the Tower-hamlets; and I have heard that he was as strict in administering justice as in the discharge of his ecclesiastical duties. He had, I understood, a small living in Nottingham-

shire. He followed my example in wedlock, having married the daughter of a respectable tradesman in the neighbourhood; he survived his lady, who had been abroad and had qualified herself for the situation of governess in a private family, and was an accomplished woman.

I once took Colonel Frederick, the son of the King of Corsica, to visit him, and Mr. Robson was much gratified by the accounts of places abroad, which the colonel had visited at a former period. Mr. Robson was chaplain to the Vintners' Company, and I once passed a festive day with them on one of their annual celebrations.

To return to Mr. Marsh. He had, I understood, gone abroad, where he acquired the German language, and published some theological and political works in that language, which he afterward translated himself into English and published. The political principles which he inculcated were sound and constitutional, and his theological doctrines, by all accounts, orthodox and profound. A few years ago, I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with him, after he had obtained his present episcopal dignity, and found that he retained all the pleasantry and good-humour which characterized him in early life, without any abatement of that decorum which was suitable to his sacred function.

I hope his lordship will forgive me if I here introduce two anecdotes which I had the pleasure of hearing him relate at his own table. Lord Sandwich, formerly at the head of the admiralty, when any application was made to him to subscribe for the repairs of the church, or other matters in the neighbourhood of his country-seat, always directed his name to be put down for ten guineas; but as his lordship was ten years in arrear, the churchwardens applied to him, requesting that he would discharge his engagement. Finding that they really expected payment, he laughingly said, "What! would you kill your decoy-duck?" but perhaps, after having had his joke, he fulfilled their expectations.

The other anecdote related to the same noble lord. He had heard that a neighbouring gentleman, who was sometimes his guest, and who was a great gourmand, wore a waistcoat laced behind, so that when he had eaten to a certain extent, the pressure of the lace induced him to check his appetite. Lord Sandwich was desirous of seeing the back of the waistcoat, and therefore, when the glass had circulated freely, proposed a loyal toast, signifying, that it should be honoured by every man with his coat off. The shrewd gourmand, aware of his lordship's design, proposed that they should all take off their waistcoats to do honour to the toast; and as the proposition was not more absurd than the other, they assented, and the man contrived to pull off his coat and waistcoat together, and huddled them so as to defeat the curiosity of his lordship. This story, though trifling in itself, will serve at least to show what follies even very intelligent men will commit in Bacchanalian excesses; and none can doubt the abilities of Lord Sandwich, whatever may be thought of his morals.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, Esq. With the merits of this gentle-



man, who has struck out a line of original and natural poetry, which must rank his name very high among the bards of this country, I was well-acquainted, and wished to know personally the author of such interesting compositions. To my surprise, conscious of my own unimportance, I received a letter from him many years ago, accompanied with two volumes of his "Lyrical Ballads;" the letter imported a desire to know what impression his poems, written by an author living in rural retirement, had made upon a man living in the bustle of active life. It was not a little gratifying to me to find that I was known at all to a poet of such original merit, and residing at so distant a place. Not having immediately an opportunity of perusing the volumes, I wrote to him to acknowledge having received them, and expressing my belief that I should very soon have occasion to thank him for the pleasure which they had afforded me. Very soon after I took up the volumes, and was so much gratified by the impressive simplicity and original genius which characterized the whole, that I wrote to him again, to testify the pleasure which they had afforded me. In his answer, he expressed his satisfaction with the opinion which I had given of his work, and after a little farther correspondence between us, I heard from him no more.

It is usual for the royal academicians to send an invitation to their patrons and friends, to view the annual exhibition a day or two before it is opened to the public; when I had the command of a newspaper some years ago, I was favoured with a card, particularly from my late friend Mr. West, the president, but now I have lost all interest of that kind. On one of these occasions, as I was going up the stairs of the academy, I overtook Sir George Beaumont and a gentleman, whom he introduced to me as Mr. Wordsworth. I was very much gratified in seeing him, and he testified similar pleasure in seeing me, inasmuch that we paid more attention to each other than to the pictures. Sir George invited me to dine with him, and to meet Mr. Wordsworth, and this invitation the worthy baronet frequently repeated while Mr. Wordsworth remained in town. I hardly need add, that these invitations were a source of more than amusement, as it would be strange indeed if I had not profited mentally by such enlightened society.

---

## CHAPTER LV.

THE REV. CHARLES ESTE. This gentleman was not only the most extraordinary character whom I ever knew, but, perhaps, the most extraordinary of his time. He was educated for the church, but was more attached to the stage; and in a brief biography of himself, which he entitled "My own Life," he states that he had actually ventured on the stage, but, after a transient experiment, renounced all

theatrical adventures, and devoted himself to the church. But though he abandoned the stage, his partiality for the theatrical profession continued, and he became connected with the most eminent actors of his time, particularly Henderson, who was perhaps the most general performer since the days of Garrick.

Feeling the possession of literary powers, he became, as was suspected, a correspondent of "The Public Advertiser," during the time of the late Henry Sampson Woodfall, who first gave the letters of Junius to the world. Mr. Woodfall was a well-educated man, a firm friend to the British constitution, and to the proper freedom of mankind. There was a blunt sincerity in his manner, which displayed the independence of his mind, his good sense, and his contempt of all affectation. It is by no means improbable that Junius knew the manliness of his character, and was induced on that ground to select him as the publisher of his letters, though he thought proper to conceal his name. In fact there was not, at the period alluded to, any conductor of a public journal whose character stood so conspicuously and so honourably forward as that of Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, for his brother, Mr. William Woodfall, did not come forth in a similar capacity till some years after the existence of "The Public Advertiser."

Mr. Este, like Junius, appeared anonymously, and was equally solicitous to conceal his name. Whether he at first offered himself as a writer for profit, cannot now be known; but his compositions, though singular, and even whimsical in style, were of so original and of so amusing a description, that Mr. Woodfall found it expedient to engage him as an established correspondent.

The literary contributions of Mr. Este were chiefly on theatrical topics, but always blended with miscellaneous matters. He was well acquainted with mankind, and an acute critic on theatrical merit. His learning and extensive reading enabled him to supply an abundance of illustrative quotations, classical and modern. There was always point, humour, and judgment in his theatrical decisions, which were strikingly manifested, notwithstanding the peculiarity of his style, that often rendered his criticism unintelligible to those who had not attended to his manner. His style seemed to be founded on that of Sterne in his "Tristram Shandy," consisting of odd breaks, with lines interspersed, and whimsically compounded phrases, strongly studded with quotations, but always connected, forcible, and shrewd, in the opinion of those who thought proper to read his articles with attention. His style may be said to be a motley mixture of passages from the classics, from Shakspeare, from Pope, and from Doctor Johnson, mingled in a mass with great native vigour and acuteness. His intimacy with Henderson induced him to be a warm panegyrist of that actor, whose talents fully justified his literary support.

On the death of Henderson, which was a severe loss to the public, Mr. Este attached himself to Mr. John Kemble, whose merits he then eulogized in "The Public Advertiser" with equal zeal, and a cordial friendship seemed to exist between them. Before the death of Hen-



derson, however, it was evident that Mr. Este did not estimate the talents of Mr. Kemble as he did after that event; for in his commendations of Henderson, before he knew Mr. Kemble, there were sometimes in his strictures allusions to the comparative formality of Kemble's manner, which roused the friendly zeal of the late Mr. Francis Twiss, father of the present Mr. Horace Twiss, to take up the cause of Mr. Kemble; and as often as such allusions appeared from the pen of Mr. Este in "The Public Advertiser," they received implied answers from Mr. Twiss, in the "Morning Chronicle," then conducted by Mr. William Woodfall. This sort of bush-fighting continued many weeks; at length, to the regret of all admirers of theatrical merit, poor Henderson died; Mr. Este then became known to the Kemble family, and was full as zealous in support of them, particularly of Mr. Kemble, as he had previously been hostile.

There was one female branch of the Kemble family upon whose acting Mr. Este, as supposed, had been very severe in his public strictures; and it so happened that the lady was afterward married to Mr. Twiss, and of course some unpleasant feelings must have occurred to Mr. Este when he was first introduced to that lady. To her honour, however, it should be mentioned, that far from resenting any comments on her acting, though they had been remarkably severe, Mr. Este became one of her favourite friends.

I remember a circumstance connected with this subject, which appears to me to be worth relating. Mr. Twiss, though he entered into a covered controversy with Mr. Este in the public journals, as I have mentioned, was so great an admirer of the writings of Mr. Este, that he copied all the criticisms of that gentleman, amounting to rather extensive manuscripts, and containing all the bitter comments on the lady in question; but when the marriage was agreed on, he determined to make them all a sacrifice on the altar of Hymen. I happened to call on him when he was employed on this expiatory oblation, and he read to me every sheet before he threw it into the fire, expressing at once his admiration of the force of the writing, notwithstanding its peculiarity, and his astonishment at the unmerited severity of the strictures.

Mr. Este and Mr. Kemble at length became so intimate, that the latter was induced to embark in a public paper instituted by Mr. Este; and as the paper did not succeed, Mr. Kemble lost about three hundred pounds in the adventure. Mr. Este, who doubtless lost as much, afterward, in conjunction with the late Captain Topham, brought forth a new paper, entitled "The World," which, on account of the whimsical style of the writing, and the high tone of superiority which it affected, characterizing the other daily papers as the "low prints," for some time attracted attention, and seemed to promise eventual success; but as Topham was an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Este, and uniformly endeavoured to imitate his mode of writing, "The World" had all its columns filled by the same strange phraseology, and the public in general looked upon it as a fantastic jargon, that was principally ridiculous, and generally unintelligible. "The

World," therefore, gradually declined, and at length was wholly relinquished.

If the style of Mr. Este, with its point, humour, and oddity, had only formed a portion of "The World," and the rest of the paper had been characterized by plain language, matters of fact, early intelligence, humorous effusions, and solid reasoning, it is not improbable that it would have been successful, particularly as there was an imposing influence in its affected contempt of the other daily journals; for I believe it may be observed, that contempt, whether merited or not, generally lowers its object.

On the extinction of "The World," Mr. Este demanded of Topham an annuity of 200*l.* as an equivalent for the terms on which at first he engaged to contribute his literary efforts in support of the paper. Topham demurred, alleging that those terms depended on its duration. Without resorting to law to support his claims, Mr. Este opened a literary battery against Topham in a paper, since defunct, entitled "The Oracle." Thus money, the great disorganizer of the most intimate connexions, divided these friends, who seemed to be devoted to each other. Este persevered in his attacks, to which he annexed his name; and Topham, unable to oppose the talents which he so highly revered, agreed to grant the annuity, which Este secured by an insurance on the life of his quondam friend and admiring coadjutor.

Such, I have been assured, was the state of the case between the parties, who, of course, never were united again. Topham then went to his estate in the country, and devoted himself to rural sports and retirement. He was gentlemanly in his manners and courteous in his disposition, but egregiously vain, and anxious for notoriety, even to the most ridiculous extravagance in his dress, which rendered him not only the object of notice, but of laughter and derision. As a proof of his morbid love of notoriety, after he had retired for some years, an allusion to his short coat, and exposed limbs, appeared in one of the public journals. One of his friends, who knew his disposition, cut the article from the paper, and sent it to him in his retreat. What would most probably have offended any other man, was very gratifying to Topham, who wrote to his friend in consequence, expressing his wonder that he was not totally forgotten in London, thanking his friend for the communication, and sending him a present of game in return for his kindness.

It has been mentioned that Mr. Este, in his communications with Mr. Henry Woodfall, was as mysterious as Junius; and though it is probable that Mr. Woodfall guessed who was his correspondent, it is not certain that he positively ever knew him. The pecuniary recompense which Mr. Este was to receive was to be conveyed to a coffee-house, or some stated place, in the same manner as Mr. Woodfall's private correspondence was to be conveyed to Junius. At length an attack appeared from the pen of the anonymous writer, importing that a certain nobleman had ruined himself by gaming. The nobleman alluded to was the late Lord Loughborough, but whether his



lordship's name was mentioned in the offensive paragraph I do not remember. His lordship commenced an action against the printer, who was cast and fined a hundred pounds, which the noble lord would not accept, but desired Mr. Woodfall to assign to some public charity. There was then a suspension of the intercourse between the anonymous correspondent and Mr. Woodfall. But after the lapse of some months, perhaps longer, the writer addressed Mr. Woodfall, desiring to know if he was disposed to receive his communications again, and requesting that he would signify his intentions by a simple *No* or *Yes* in his next paper. Mr. Woodfall, smarting under the consequences of the prosecution, answered "*No*," in the largest letters that his printing-office contained. This circumstance, which should have been mentioned in the due course of the narration, probably induced Mr. Este, having tried the force of his talents in the field of public literature, to direct his attention to the establishment of a public journal under his own control.

In justice to the memory of Mr. Este, it should be observed, that he did not invent the charge against the nobleman in question, as it was generally reported at the time, and believed in spite of the legal decision.

Mr. Este was also suspected of having introduced, in the paper called "*The World*," some defamatory articles on the memory of Lord Cowper, which was the subject of another prosecution. It was thought strange that reflections on the memory of the dead should be the subject of legal punishment, but it was contended that defamation of the dead tended to excite disturbance among their living relations. However, by the advice and assistance of my friend Mr. Const, the counsel, now chairman of the Middlesex sessions, this difficulty was also surmounted; but the fear of such future dangers intimidated both Topham and Este, and not only weakened their exertions for the paper, but inclined them to dispose of it, or to give it a death-blow, which it finally received, and was extinguished without regret, except to the parties who were concerned in it.

Topham was intimately connected with Peter Andrews, a gentleman who had acquired a large fortune by his contracts with government for gunpowder. He became a member of parliament, and had some reputation for literary talents. He wrote many poetical trifles for "*The World*" newspaper, and the whole of the poetical contributions for that paper were published in two volumes. The intimacy between Topham and Andrews was so great, that they were generally invited together in most companies; and it was reported that they met every morning to form plans for distinguishing themselves by witty dialogues and mutual *bons mots* in the evening. But as they were both in some degree deaf, they must have been liable to fall into miscarriages that would have betrayed their preconcerted impromptus. It is therefore hardly probable that they had engaged in so hazardous an adventure.

I was a member of a weekly club entitled "*Keep the Line*," though perhaps no club could more trespass upon the line of decorum,

which its name implied, with respect to the liberties that the members took in rallying each other. Andrews was a member of this club, and being of an irritable disposition, was ill qualified to bear the satirical and sportive sallies of his associates. It was well said of him by Mr. Merry, the poet, that "Andrews considered illness less as a misfortune than as an insult." He was the author of several epilogues, purposely calculated for the talents of the late admirable comic actor Mr. Lewis, and the late Mrs. Mattocks. These compositions were not destitute of humour and point, but were chiefly ludicrous exaggerations of the lowest of city manners among inferior tradespeople, and would have had little effect if not delivered by those excellent performers.

Andrews wrote a play, but the drama was far beyond the reach of his powers. He first excited public attention by having seduced Miss Brown from the stage, when she was rising rapidly into fame by the beauty of her person and her musical and theatrical talents. But the subsequent conduct of this lady strongly indicated that he had little reason to pride himself on the triumph of his gallantry, as it is by no means improbable that any other assailant, with an equal opportunity, would have been equally successful.

The fate of this captivating syren was pitiable. She went to India, and returned to this country with the captain of the Nancy packet, to whom she was attached, and the vessel, with the whole of the ship's company, was lost among the rocks of Scilly.

Andrews very early in life began to assume the man of fashion. His father was a drysalter, or of some similar business, in Watling-street; and the son, after assisting his father in the business of the day, used to sally forth in the evening with sword and bag to Ranelagh, or some other public place. He gradually formed higher connexions, and engaging in profitable speculations, soon became intimate with the profligate Lord Lyttelton. They were both superstitious, and fond of relating stories of ghosts, of which Andrews had a great collection, and, being a nervous man, he seemed to place implicit confidence in the most extravagant fictions. Lyttelton possessed superior talents, but appeared to be equally credulous.

Andrews had, as I have observed, a knack of writing epilogues chiefly suited to the taste of the galleries of a theatre, or the vulgar part of an audience wherever seated. When he had finished a composition of this kind, and received the approbation of the author of the play for which it was intended, he generally asked the latter why he had not written the epilogue himself; and when the dramatist declared his want of such ability, Andrews would gradually work himself into anger, as a lion lashes itself into fury, because the task had been thrown upon him. He was, however, hospitable, kind, and good-humoured when nothing interfered with the peculiarities of his disposition.

To return to Mr. Este. He published in the year 1795, "An Account of his Journey in the year 1793, through Flanders, Brabant, Germany, and Switzerland." It is an amusing and instructive work;



and shows great acuteness and observation, as well as industry. It is at times affected in style, but less erratic than that which characterized his contributions to the public press. The journey was undertaken for the laudable purpose of finding the best medical school for his son, by whom he was accompanied. The latter gentleman is a surgeon of eminence in this metropolis, and highly esteemed for his personal merits.

Mr. Este in this work states that as Pavia was recommended to him as a good medical school, he was willing to proceed to that place; but with his usual peculiarity of style he observes, that he "could not but be scared by the powers of distance and of doubt." This is a strange acknowledgment of the fear of travelling, as he afterward ventured twice to the West Indies, in order to settle the concerns of the gentleman who married his daughter, one of the most beautiful and amiable of women in the estimation of those who had the pleasure of knowing her. This lady died in the prime of youth and beauty.

Mr. Este, as I have observed, was an acute and sound critic on acting, and much attached to the last race of performers, particularly Garrick and Henderson. His opinions were emphatic and abrupt. When the late George Cooke was a popular favourite, I asked Mr. Este if he liked him. He answered energetically, "God forbid." And when I asked him his opinion of Mr. Kean, during the zenith of his fame, his answer was, "He has not an element," not appearing to consider the spirit that frequently marks the acting of that performer as of "the right savour."

The last time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Este was at the house of our mutual friend Sir William Beechey, where he was all animation, and exerted himself so much to entertain us, that, as Sir William told me, he felt languid and indisposed on the following day, and added that I had killed him by my admiration and encouragement of his humorous sallies.

Mr. Este was one of the readers of the royal chapel at Whitehall, and in my opinion he delivered the sacred service with most impressive solemnity, though some considered his manner as rather too theatrical. This notion, however, probably arose from his known attachment to dramatic amusements, and his connexion with theatrical performers. Mr. Este told me that he remembered Mrs. Pritchard, and, though an excellent comic actress, she was inferior to Mrs. Siddons in the higher province of tragedy.

Such, in my humble estimation, is an impartial character of Mr. Este. He possessed an acute, discerning, and decided mind, and if he had been trained to politics rather than to the church, would have been an able servant of government. He would have had sagacity enough to discover all public abuses, and firmness enough to prevent their continuance, as far as his power could extend. His form was of the middle size and stature. His face was plain, but expressive; and I heard Mrs. Siddons, no mean judge of character and manners, once say, that the ease, courtesy, and spirit of his conversation amply compensated for any want of beauty in his features. He was firmly

attached to the British constitution, but the revolutionary principles of France, during the period of their ascendancy, seemed to have rendered him a more zealous advocate for liberty than he had been before that lamentable event; yet, on the late king's recovery, nothing could manifest more fervid, ardent, and devoted loyalty than his writings exhibited in the earlier pages of "The World."

As a proof, however, that he was considered a friend to revolutionary principles, the late Colonel Bosville, who kept an open table for revolutionary characters, bequeathed 2000*l.* to Mr. Este. Colonel Bosville at first kept an open and expensive table at the Piazza Coffee-house, and afterward at his own mansion. His guests went without invitation, and it was usual among them, when they intended to dine at the Piazza, or at the colonel's house, to tell each other that they dined "at home." The colonel must have been very rich, as well as very revolutionary, to support so hospitable an establishment. He bequeathed, I believe, the same sum to the late Major James, who was one of the officers of the wagon-train, and was a favourite agent of the late Marquis of Hastings.

Major James, whom I knew in very early life, was generally styled Jacobin James, from his supposed attachment to those political principles which made him a favourite with Colonel Bosville. It is said that he had advanced 8000*l.* in the service of the Marquis of Hastings, which his widow, with a large family, was not able to obtain, not for want of justice in the marquis, but on account of the impoverished state of his affairs.

Major James was the author or compiler of a military dictionary in two volumes, a valuable work, of which he also published an abridgement. The major was attached to poetry as well as to politics, and published two volumes of the former, with a portrait of himself, and plates illustrative of passages in his works. He was perpetually writing impromptus, and like Master Matthew, in Ben Jonson's play, repeated them in the street to every acquaintance whom he met. After the first salutation he was sure to say a lady asked him to write on such a subject, or that some lines occurred to him on such an occasion. I knew him for upwards of thirty years, and never once met him without being favoured with a recital of one or two of his extemporary effusions. He was a friendly, good-humoured man, and if he had devoted his pen to military subjects only, would doubtless have suggested many hints for the improvement of the service. He was understood to be a good Latin and French scholar, and to have conducted himself through life with integrity and a kind disposition. He was very intimate with Mr. Combe, whom I have mentioned in another place, and purchased at a large price a fine portrait of that gentleman, which was painted by Mr. Northcote.

James was once attacked by a gentleman whom I knew under the name of Count Stuarton, a Frenchman, and devoted to the Bourbon family. Stuarton wrote a publication entitled "The Revolutionary Plutarch," in which he gave a severe account of the family of Bonaparte, and of most of the persons who had distinguished themselves



in effecting the French revolution, and by assisting in the elevation of the Corsican emperor. These works were by no means relied on as authentic memorials, though they had an extensive sale.

What imputations he cast upon Major James I cannot now remember, but they were of so strong a description that James thought it necessary to bring an action against the author for the vindication of his character, as he was in the military service of his majesty. Fearing the issue of the trial, the count left this country, and it is said went to America. He was a very intelligent and agreeable man, and so elegant in his manners as to justify the supposition that he was really a foreign nobleman.

James left a widow with several children, but on account of the failure of his claim on the Marquis of Hastings, in very indifferent circumstances. He often expressed a wish to introduce me to his wife and family, but never did, and I have heard that she married again. Mr. Chambers, the late banker in Bond-street, before his own misfortunes overwhelmed him, advocated her claim on the marquis with great zeal, but without effect.

No man in London had a more extensive acquaintance than James, who was an agreeable companion, and was so much invited abroad that he must have enjoyed but little domestic intercourse with his family. As an epigrammatist he sometimes hit upon a lucky point, but his poems have no originality, pathos, or force, and have barely the merit of smooth versification.

Mr. Este, it appears, had been into the city to see his friend Mr. Sharpe, a gentleman well known in the literary and political circles, and who, I believe, is the only surviving member of Dr. Johnson's last club. He has generally been known by the designation of "Conversation Sharpe," from the justness of his observations, and the abundance of his anecdotes. He was also a member of the "Keep-the-line club," which I have already mentioned. Mr. Este returned home somewhat indisposed, but declined any refreshing nourishment. He was soon affected by a violent fever, which terminated in his death, to the regret of all who understood his real character, and could appreciate his talents and acquisitions.

Mr. Combe, who was himself powerful in conversation, told me that he enjoyed no conversation more than that of Mr. Este, whose whimsical and humorous flights manifested a pregnant and luxuriant imagination, as well as varied and extensive knowledge. The late Mr. John Kemble was also a great admirer of the original powers and conversational talents of Mr. Este, particularly as he was an able critic on theatrical performances, and could give Mr. Kemble a faithful and vivid description of those actors who had been distinguished before Mr. Kemble was a candidate for theatrical honours.

I had the good fortune to see Mr. Barry perform in the decline of his life; but I admired his venerable remains, and was surprised, when I once asked Mr. Este's opinion of that actor, to hear him say that he was "a poor creature." The reason of this opinion, I conceive, was that Mr. Este, who looked for intellect rather than for sensibility,

found the latter chiefly in Barry, and both in unrivalled union in Garrick. It should be remembered, however, that Barry was famous in Othello, which Garrick relinquished ; and that he maintained so successful a contention with Garrick in Romeo, that the public judgment seemed to be undecided as to the superiority of their respective performances.

The REV. JOHN WARNER, D.D. A person more generally known than this gentleman by various ranks, has never fallen within my notice. From the gayety of his disposition, and, perhaps, from the freedom of his conduct, he was commonly styled Jack Warner. He was the son of Ferdinando Warner, well known at the time for a publication on the gout. The subject of my present attention was a very popular preacher at Tavistock Chapel, in Broad-court, Drury-lane. He was afterward chaplain to Lord Gower, now Marquis of Stafford, when ambassador to France, just before the first revolution broke out in that country. His lordship, struck with horror at the dreadful excesses of the people, and finding that there was an end of all legitimate government in that country, took an early opportunity of returning to England. Dr. Warner was favourable to the principles on which the French revolution was founded, but abhorred the sanguinary manner in which they were carried into effect.

No man knew the world better than Dr. Warner, and few equalled him in companionable gayety. And here I can give a striking proof of that ascendancy which Mr. David Williams acquired over his argumentative opponents in company, by the negligent manner in which he passed over their opinions, and avoided giving them a direct answer.

I dined with Mr. Merry, the poet, when Mr. David Williams, Dr. Warner, and, as far as I recollect, Sir James Mackintosh, were of the party. The doctor spoke warmly in favour of the revolutionary principles of the French demagogues, chiefly directing his discourse to David Williams, who listened with a sort of affable contempt, which absolutely cowed the doctor, who soon retired, though he was remarkable for the spirit, humour, and knowledge by which he at all times appeared to lead the conversation. When he had retired, David Williams, with the same sort of contemptuous negligence, said, "That's an odd little man," though the doctor was nearly as large as himself, and on any other occasion would have been more than a match for him in colloquial powers.

I once asked the doctor what was his manner of preaching by which he had acquired so much popularity. "Why," said he, "I used to take two oratorical boxes with me into the pulpit, one filled with the virtues, and the other with the vices, and avoided all dry doctrines. When I endeavoured to allure the audience to goodness, I took a virtue out of my box, and exhibited it in the most glowing colours. When I attempted to deter them from evil courses, I took a vice out of the other box, and represented its odious deformities with the most terrific energy, by which means I kept my congrega-



tion awake, which probably would not have been the case if I had entered into formal reasoning and theological discussion.

Ludicrous as this description of himself as a preacher was, it illustrates his manner, and accounts for his eminence among the general order of people. He once accompanied the late facetious George Selwyn on a mission to Florence, as I understood, to the mother of the late Earl of Carlisle, a lady of a very whimsical character; and the letters which he wrote describing the events of his journey were highly diverting, but were somewhat too free in their nature. They were addressed to the late Mr. Penneck, with whom I dined tête-à-tête. After dinner he read them to me, and successively committed them to the flames.

Dr. Warner was a good-looking man, but rather negligent in his person, and used to walk in the streets without gloves. I have mentioned him in the article respecting Mr. Charles Townley as one of the party who deliberated on the conscience of a Roman Catholic priest, and sanctioned his acceptance of a Protestant benefice in the gift of that gentleman. I never heard when or where Dr. Warner died, and this obscure decease is extraordinary, considering that he was so generally known to various classes of society, and so courted for his companionable qualities. He was considered as a good Greek, Latin, and French scholar.

## CHAPTER LVI.

JOHN NICHOLLS, Esq. Above thirty years have passed since I was first introduced to this gentleman at the apartments of my old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck, and very many years elapsed before I had the pleasure of being again known to him. When I was first introduced to him, I was struck by the softness of his voice, the suavity of his manners, and the extent, variety, and profundity of his knowledge, so far as I could presume to judge on so casual and brief an interview; and I confess I was much surprised at the warmth with which he expressed his sentiments when he became a member of the House of Commons. But when I read his work, entitled "Recollections and Reflections on Public Affairs during the reign of his late majesty George the Third," my surprise gave way to my conviction of his genuine public spirit and attachment to the British constitution, which he seemed anxious to see retained in its full purity. His work appears to me to be one of the soundest political productions that have appeared in my time.

I have before said, that I do not pretend to be much of a politician; but my reading has been extensive, and I have had the pleasure of conversing with several of the most enlightened characters of my time. Considering the work of Mr. Nicholls as what ought to be the

*vade mecum* of every lover of his country, I shall take the liberty of referring to some passages in it, though I may be accused of presumption in venturing to form an estimate of so masterly a composition, and sometimes to differ in opinion with the learned, sagacious, and patriotic author.

Mr. Nicholls has traced with great judgment the principal and secondary causes of the French revolution, and considers as one of the chief of them the distinction between the noblesse and the bourgeoisie: and when we reflect on the profligacy, extravagance, and arrogance of the former, it is rather a matter of wonder that the latter should have submitted to them so long. It is to be hoped, for their own sakes, that the noblesse in all countries will take warning from the fatal history of the French revolution.

Mr. Nicholls does not approve of triennial parliaments, and gives good reasons. Mr. Burke was no favourite with Mr. Nicholls, who, of course, entertained a high opinion of his abilities and knowledge, but not of his principles; and from what I saw and heard of Mr. Burke, I entirely concur with Mr. Nicholls. Mr. Burke was violent and vulgar.

Mr. Nicholls says, that "On one occasion he spoke of the Earl of Shelburne in terms so coarse and unmeasured as to preclude all possibility of reconciliation." This was exactly the style of a vulgar upstart, which character he fully manifested in his treatment of Mr. Hastings in the House of Lords, as I have mentioned in another place.

Mr. Nicholls had previously mentioned the "violence and arrogance" of Burke, even to his great patron Lord Rockingham. I presume to differ with him, however, respecting the character of Lord Thurlow, of whom he says, that "trimming was not congenial to his character." But to my certain knowledge, during the king's (George the Third) illness in 1788-9, though he appeared to be acting with government during that melancholy period, he used secretly to visit Carlton House, where he several times met Mr. Sheridan; and as soon as he found that the king was recovering, he made that memorable speech in the House of Lords, emphatically exclaiming, that when he forgot his sovereign, he hoped his God might forget him.

Lord Thurlow was certainly in the "heart of the mystery" of the opposition party, which he deserted without the least ceremony when there appeared gratifying signs of his majesty's restoration. As a strong presumption also that Lord Thurlow secretly consulted with Mr. Sheridan during his majesty's illness, and when there was little hope of his recovery, Mr. Sheridan had drawn up the outlines of a prospectus, submitted, no doubt, to his lordship, for changing the politics of "The Morning Post," then the chief ministerial paper, which had been recently purchased by the party. I had the sketch of this prospectus in Mr. Sheridan's own handwriting, which may still be among my papers.

When the opposition leaders, at a private meeting on the subject of the first Regency bill, expressed an apprehension that they should



find a powerful adversary in Lord Thurlow, Charles Fox observed, that they had often opposed him with success in the House of Commons, and he saw no reason why he should conquer them in the Lords; adding, from the old ballad :

"I trust there are within this land  
Five hundred men as good as he."

I presume also to differ with Mr. Nicholls in his not very favourable opinion of Mr. Pitt, whom he blames for having been overborne against his better judgment to engage in a war against French principles. Mr. Pitt was too disinterested in his character to be influenced by a love of place, except from a desire to serve his country; and the firmness of his mind was not likely to agree to any measure except upon conviction. Why may it not be supposed that Mr. Pitt was alarmed at those revolutionary principles which overthrew the government of France, and threatened the destruction of every throne in Europe? Mr. Pitt, to use his own expression, acted according to "existing circumstances,"—an accordance that might be true policy: for who can pretend to foretell the consequences of any measure? And Mr. Pitt might think, that to join in an opposition to French principles abroad, was one of the best means to secure the government of this country. Besides, at that period, there were revolutionary spirits at home, who, if they could have destroyed the throne, would probably have proceeded to all the bloody horrors of the French revolution.

I venture also to differ with Mr. Nicholls in his estimate of the character of his late majesty George the Third. That monarch was of a peaceable and quiet disposition, highly amiable in private life, benevolent, and a friend to the arts. His reign was too much disturbed by the intrigues and violence of party: and who can say, that to preserve national tranquillity, he did not at times yield to the counsels of his ministers, contrary to his better judgment? His majesty was a zealous friend to literature, and to those arts which embellish and dignify the country, and are honourable to the powers of the human mind.

Before I take leave of Mr. Nicholls's valuable work, I ought to apologize for venturing at all to offer my humble remarks on what appears to me to be the result of deep and extensive historical knowledge, political sagacity, enlarged views, and sincere devotion to the genuine principles of the constitution, and which, while it supports the rights and dignity of the throne, equally tends to protect and secure the privileges and safety of the people.

Mr. Nicholls, in his work, speaks favourably of Sir Robert Walpole; and in a private conversation, in which I had the pleasure of hearing his opinions more at large as to the character of Sir Robert, he said, that it was his chief and constant object to secure the House of Brunswick on the throne, and to preclude all possibility of the return of the Stuarts. Mr. Nicholls took no notice of the enormous

system of bribery by which he was accused of supporting his administration ; conceiving, I suppose, that Sir Robert, at that critical period, when there was a strong spirit of Jacobitism prevalent in a great body of friends to the Stuart line, thought, as selfishness is the great principle of human action, bribery was likely to be the most powerful antidote to the political poison, and consequently the best means to remove all danger from the Brunswick family.

Here I may introduce an anecdote which I learned from my friend Dr. Monsey, who knew the fact. A public dinner was held at a tavern in Yarmouth during the reign of George the First. The company almost entirely consisted of friends to the Stuart family. The king's health, without specifying the name of George, was drunk in so mysterious a manner as to alarm a sturdy old farmer, who was strongly attached to the new family on the throne : therefore, when it came to his turn to pass the toast, he said :—" Gentlemen, the present toast has been given in so enigmatical a way that I do not understand it ; therefore, to put an end to all doubts and mysteries, here's King George." When the next man in succession was to drink the toast, he said :—" Well, then, here's the king that God loves best." " Hold ! hold !" said the loyal farmer, interrupting him, " that's not King George !" A triumphant laugh of the Jacobite party followed, of course, and this simple mistake covered the loyal farmer with confusion.

My father was a member of an evening club, held at a tavern in Cross-street, Hatton Garden, which was frequented by the chief inhabitants of that neighbourhood, among whom was Dr. Crawford, who kept a respectable academy in that street. Mr. Munden the actor, and myself, were among his scholars. I did not recollect Mr. Munden, but I believe he recollected me ; and as he was a respectable member of society, as well as an excellent actor, I was glad to renew our intercourse when he became one of the chief comic props of the London stage.

At the club above mentioned, a Mr. Matthews, an eminent dancing-master, was among the members. What Churchill says of Davies the actor, might, according to report, be said of the dancing-master :

That Matthews had a very pretty wife.

Matthews had become acquainted with a Mr. Sterne, a German, and a scholar. He was an usher for the foreign department of Dr. Crawford's academy. As he was but in indifferent circumstances, Matthews invited him to reside in his house, in Brook-street, Holborn. The beauty of Mrs. Matthews unhappily captivated the sensitive German, insomuch that the friends of Matthews expressed their surprise that so young and good-looking a man of talents should be received as a resident in his house. Matthews became alarmed, and by some alteration in his conduct towards Sterne, excited strong suspicions in the latter. It unfortunately happened, that one of the children of Matthews, unable to eat the whole of a piece of bread and butter, had



left the remainder on the table in the room assigned to Sterne, who considered it as a studied insult to his poverty on the part of Matthews, and determined on revenge, not merely on Matthews, but on those whom he suspected of having excited his jealousy, and consequently of having obliged him to quit the house. He, therefore, with a concealed brace of pistols, went to the club as usual; and soon after Matthews appeared, he drew forth his pistols, with one shot Matthews dead, and with the other attempted to destroy himself, but was prevented. He was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty, and sentenced to death. Dr. Crawford, and I believe other friends of Sterne, endeavoured to save his life on the plea of insanity; but in vain.

My father, from motives of humanity, visited him in Newgate, and Sterne told him, that as he had suspected him to be one of the chief advisers of Matthews, and to have excited his jealousy, he had determined to wreak his vengeance on him. He added, that he went for that purpose to Dobney's Bowling-green, then a popular place, at a part of Islington now called Pentonville, which I well remember; that he was going to shoot my father, but that some person accidentally joined in conversation with him, and he was afraid of destroying an innocent man.

Sterne did not deny his attachment to Mrs. Matthews, and lamented his unhappy passion, but declared that he had no dishonourable intention. He took my father by the hand, expressed his regret at his suspicions, which my father assured him were wholly unfounded, as he had not officiously interfered on the occasion. Sterne then submitted to his fate with firmness. What became of Mrs. Matthews I never heard; but it is probable that, recommended by beauty and misfortune, she did not want friends.

I hope I shall not be accused of levity, when, to relieve the impression of this melancholy story, I mention, that Mr. Foot (an apothecary in Hatton Garden, and the uncle of my late friend Jessé Foot, the eminent surgeon, who was one of the members of the club), on one night when the subject was Dutch affairs, suddenly exclaimed: "Let me see, who is now the King of Holland?" A general laugh prevailed in the room, and poor Foot was never afterwards mentioned except by the title of the King of Holland.

Dr. Monsey told me that he was once in company with another physician and an eminent farrier. The physician stated, that among the difficulties of his profession was that of discovering the maladies of children, as they could not explain the symptoms of their disorders. "Well," said the farrier, "your difficulties are not greater than mine, for my patients, the horses, are equally unable to explain their complaints." "Ah!" rejoined the physician, "my brother doctor must conquer me, as he has brought his cavalry against my infantry."

The late WILLIAM CLAY, Esq. I became acquainted with this gentleman, an eminent and wealthy merchant, at the hospitable table

of my old and esteemed friend Francis Const, Esq., where I heard him relate the following story, which he vouched as a fact within his own knowledge.

A gentleman was one morning passing through Fenchurch-street, where he saw a young man in livery, with a pitcher in his hand, going for water to a neighbouring pump. The likeness of this young man to a departed friend induced him to stop him and ask his name. The name being the same as that of his deceased friend, confirmed him in the suspicion that the young man was the son of that friend. He knew of the existence of the young man, but knew not what had become of him. Upon inquiry, the young man told him he was servant to Mr. —, an eminent wholesale tradesman in that street, who was very kind to him, had encouraged his addresses to the cook-maid, and, on their marriage, had promised to establish them in a public-house. It appeared that this tradesman was executor to the father of this young man, and therefore the gentleman who had thus accidentally met him desired that he would obtain leave of his master to be absent for half an hour, next day, and then meet the gentleman at the same place. In the mean time, the gentleman who took so kind an interest in the son investigated the property which his father had left, and found that, to the extent of 40,000*l.*, it had been bequeathed to the son, whom the executor had kept in servitude, suppressing the will; and by promoting his marriage and settling him in an humble condition, with which he would be probably contented, not knowing his rights, hoped to keep him in obscurity and himself possess the inheritance. Mr. Clay told me the name of the perfidious executor, who, on being applied to with a proper legal authority, was thunderstruck, and made no opposition to the claims of the young man; and never after could encounter the gaze of those who visited him on business, but constantly bent his eyes upon his account-book, and in that manner conversed with them.

I had forgotten this extraordinary story; and therefore, on meeting Mr. Clay at Mr. Const's, desired him to repeat it. No doubt villainous designs of the same kind as that which was so happily frustrated on this occasion, have too often been successful; but as this fact was so well ascertained, it was proper to introduce it, as it may operate as a warning to those who have property to leave to be cautious in the choice of their executors.

I may here properly introduce another singular event which divines may reasonably assign to an interposition of Providence. I derived it from a lady who knew the gentleman, and on whose veracity I can rely. A gentleman, now dead, who was connected with Kensington Palace, had dined in Piccadilly, near to Hyde Park, and on going home late at night, thought that he might safely proceed through Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. When he approached the bridge in Hyde Park, two men, who were leaning over each side of the bridge, left their station, joined each other on the middle of the road, and approached towards him. It was at the



time when, within my remembrance, it was the fashion with gentlemen to wear swords in the street. He drew his sword, and desired that they would open a passage for him. They, however, continued to advance, and as he did not know how they might be armed, he thought proper to retreat, and being acquainted with a gentleman who lived at Knightsbridge, he directed his course thither, and climbed to the top of his friend's wall, intending to apprise the family. When he attempted to descend into the yard, a ferocious dog barked so violently that he kept his post some time, and then returned into the park, intending to pursue his way, thinking that the men had left the place; but they remained on the spot, and advanced towards him as before. He retired, crossed the park, and entered the gardens at the north-east door. As soon as he passed the pond, he heard a splash as if somebody had thrown himself into the water. For a moment he suspected that this might be a trick of some confederate of the men, but a sudden glimpse of the moon displayed a woman struggling with the water. He hastened immediately to the place, plunged into the water, brought her safely to the bank, and inquired the cause of her desperate design. She told him she was pregnant by a gentleman who suspected that he was not the cause, and had abandoned the connexion; but her unfortunate condition was obvious, and that her father had discarded her; therefore, hopeless of recovering her seducer and her parent, she had resolved to get rid of her misery by suicide. On further inquiry, the gentleman found that he was acquainted with her seducer and her parent. To the former he disclosed this desperate proof of the probable truth of her charge, and, as her character was otherwise amiable, he married her. She was reconciled to her family, and conducted herself as a wife and mother with fidelity and affection.

---

## CHAPTER LVII.

THE REV. WILLIAM JACKSON. It may be thought strange that, considering the unfortunate end of this gentleman, I should introduce him in the present work; but as he was one of my earliest friends, and as I derived much advantage from his conversation and counsel, during the intercourse of many years, I cannot but remember him with pleasure as well as regret. I became acquainted with him at the house of Mrs. Mills, formerly a public singer at Vauxhall, and afterward a musical actress at Drury-lane theatre, during the management of Mr. Garrick. Her maiden name was Burchill, under which name she originally sang at Vauxhall Gardens, and, I believe, was apprenticed to old Mr. Tyers, the first proprietor of that place of amusement. She was in the capacity of a milk-girl in

the neighbourhood of Mr. Tyers's country seat, and used to sing while she carried on her pastoral employment. Mr. Tyers was struck with the sweetness, power, and extent of her voice, and inquiring into her condition, obtained the consent of her parents to bind her to his service. She, therefore, for some years lived with his family, and received musical instruction at his expense. She was not disposed to study, and therefore made very little progress in musical science, depending wholly on her ear and her memory.

During her apprenticeship she married the younger Vincent, a performer on the oboe, an instrument on which his father obtained celebrity, and one of the band in the Vauxhall orchestra. When her articles expired, she was engaged at Drury-lane theatre; and Churchill, one of the least lenient of poetical critics, speaks of her in his "Rosciad" in the following terms:

"Lo! Vincent comes—with simple grace array'd;  
She laughs at paltry arts, and scorns parade.  
Nature, through her, is by reflection shown,  
While Gay once more knows Polly for his own.  
Talk not to me of diffidence and fear,  
I see it all, but must forgive it here;  
Defects like these which modest terrors cause,  
From impudence itself extort applause;  
Candour and Reason still take Virtue's part;  
We love e'en foibles with so good a heart."

Here Churchill was probably induced to give so favourable a report of her abilities by his personal knowledge of her amiable disposition; for I was on intimate terms with her in my early days, and can vouch for the justness of the poet's testimony in favour of her disposition, though he was certainly too partial to her talents. With little education, she had an excellent understanding, and with the advantage of good culture, would have been an excellent epistolary writer.

On the death of Mr. Vincent, a few years after she quitted the stage, and was married to Mr. Mills, a gentleman who was captain of one of the ships that coast to different British settlements in India, and subsequently occupied a public-station at Calcutta. This gentleman was the last survivor of those who were unfortunately confined in what was styled the Black Hole at Calcutta. He is mentioned by Mr. Orme in his account of our Military Operations in India with great honour, for his kindness to Governor Holwell on that melancholy occasion.

Mr. Mills related the mournful event to me himself. He told me that he stood near to the window in that dreadful situation, and that Governor Holwell stood immediately behind him. The governor, nearly exhausted by pressure and the want of air, in a languid tone said, that unless he could get nearer to the window, he should soon be dead. Mr. Mills told me that he felt himself so strong, that, reflecting on the importance of the governor's life compared with his



own, he with great difficulty made way for the governor, and took the place which he had left. The consequence was that the governor revived, but Mr. Mills was soon exhausted, and on the opening of the door, was removed as apparently dead, among those who fell victims on the spot.

Governor Holwell, in his account, as far as I remember, does not render the same justice to Mr. Mills as the latter received from the statement of Mr. Orme.

I was so attached to Mrs. Mills's daughter, that if our means would have justified us, we should have been married. The mother tolerated our courtship under a persuasion, too common, that prosperous events might possibly occur. I had, however, a lucky escape, as she proved a very frail character. She married the son of Mr. Ferguson, who formerly gave lectures on astronomy, and other branches of science, in this metropolis. The son was a surgeon in the service of the Hon. East India Company. His grave disposition ill-suited with the volatile character of his wife, and she soon parted with him, placing herself under another protector, whom she quitted in turn, according to Rowe's description :

"One lover to another still succeeds,  
Another and another after that,  
And the last fool was welcome as the former."

However, as her personal charms were much upon the wane, during her residence with her last protector, an old foreigner, she ended her life with him. He was rich, and as he was anxious to qualify her as a public singer, he employed many musical instructors at a considerable expense, but to no purpose, as her voice, though powerful, was not well-toned, and she did not possess a correct ear. My old friend, the late Dr. Arnold, told me that having been professionally consulted, he honestly advised the old gentleman to desist from the attempt, as her voice was *acid*, her ear incorrect, and she did not possess requisite talents. The old gentleman, however, was too dotingly fond to listen to the doctor's disinterested and friendly counsel, and other professors were employed, but without success ; and at last she relinquished the vain attempt.

My friendship for the mother, and my recollection of my early attachment to herself, induced me to take an interest in her success. I went to hear her sing at the Pantheon, when the concerts at that place were under the direction of my old friend, Dr. Burney. I was not able to be in time for the first act of the concert, and therefore asked the doctor how Mrs. Ferguson came off? "What, did you not hear her in the first act?" said the doctor. On my answering in the negative, "Well," said he, with the caution that usually accompanies a long knowledge of the world, "she sings in the second act, and then you can judge for yourself." I found, on hearing her, that Dr. Arnold's opinion, as I might of course have ex-

pected, was well founded, and was confirmed, by implication, by the wary reserve of Dr. Burney.

Mrs. Mills retained her friendship for me during her life. I ought to have before mentioned, that, observing the levity of her daughter, in pure friendship she advised me to break off the connexion. I attended the funeral of Mrs. Mills by desire of her husband, who survived her many years; and at his request also, wrote the epitaph which is inscribed on her tombstone in the church-yard of St. Pancras. But I have wandered too long from the account of my unfortunate friend Mr. Jackson.

He was a native of Ireland, and was entered at the University of Oxford, where he resided many years, and was afterward ordained and acted as curate at St. Mary-le-Strand, but never obtained a benefice. I never heard him preach, but have been told that his matter was solid, and his manner dignified and solemn. When I first knew him he was married to a widow. She was older than her husband, of a romantic turn, and much inclined to read novels. She was very fond of music, and performed sufficiently to amuse herself on the piano-forte.

When I first became acquainted with Mr. Jackson, he was editor of a daily paper, entitled the "Public Ledger," which, amid the novelties and fluctuations of the diurnal press, is the only one that still maintains its ground, its only competitors at that period being the "Public Advertiser," "The Gazetteer," and the "Daily Advertiser," all of which have sunk into oblivion. The "Public Ledger," at the time that Mr. Jackson conducted it, had an action brought against it by the celebrated Samuel Foote, for a libel on his character on a charge too well known to need mentioning in this place. Mr. Foote, whose morals were of the loosest description, and whose extravagant mode of living obliged him to raise supplies as well as he could, addressed a letter to the celebrated Duchess of Kingston, intimating to the lady that he had written a drama, in which she was the heroine, but that it was in her power to prevent its introduction on the stage. The duchess, indignant at this application, the meaning of which was obvious, sent an angry and contemptuous answer, probably thinking that if she were to bribe him in one instance, she might be subject to future applications. Foote replied: the duchess rejoined with much asperity, sarcasm, and not without indecent allusions.

The correspondence was published, and appeared in all the public journals of the times, and is introduced by my old friend Mr. Cooke in his Life of Foote. Foote evidently conceived that the letters which bore the signature of the duchess were really the production of Jackson, and therefore, when he brought upon the stage his comedy called "A Trip to Calais," he introduced Jackson under the name of Dr. Viper, as chaplain to Lady Kitty Crocodile, meaning the duchess.

Here I may mention a cordial junction between those who were



once adverse to each other, a circumstance indeed not uncommon in the fluctuation of human affairs. John Palmer, the actor, represented Jackson as Dr. Viper, imitating his manner, and copying the peculiarities of his dress with black frogs on his coat; yet a few years afterward Palmer and Jackson became intimate friends, and co-operated in the erection of the Royalty theatre, in the neighbourhood of that in Goodman's Fields, where Garrick first appeared on a London stage.

Jackson's first wife was the widow of a gentleman of Cornwall, who died before he came of age, otherwise he would have been possessed of 2000*l.* a-year, and of course have better provided for a widow. She was a woman of an excellent understanding, with great humour, though, as I have said, somewhat romantic. She died of a cancer in her breast, which she bore with great fortitude, and received all possible kindness and sympathy from her husband, who stood near her couch for hours, fanning her during the warmth of the season and the violence of her disorder.

I attended her funeral, which fully attested, by its expense, the respect of her husband, though whatever income she possessed expired with her. Jackson was a very gallant man, and much favoured by the ladies, but so negligent, that he suffered the letters from his fair correspondents to remain in his coat pocket, to which his wife had easy access. On one or two occasions, when the ladies had appointed Clement's Inn as the place for meeting with Jackson, his wife used to attend at the time and place, but Jackson was so prudent that he was never seen, and therefore, though his wife was very jealous, she had no proof of his infidelity.

"The Public Ledger," as I have said, was under a prosecution from Foote at the time when I became acquainted with Jackson, who then was the editor. The ground of the action was a series of letters on the charge against Foote, written with great bitterness by Jackson—no doubt by the instigation of the Duchess of Kingston, to whom Jackson appeared to be in the light of chaplain, though, from the lady's character and conduct, however she might need religious consultation, she was not at all likely to require it. During the legal progress of the action, Foote luckily died, and put an end to the fears of the proprietor of "The Ledger."

Among the friends and visitors of Mr. Jackson were old General Oglethorpe, who is immortalized in the lines of Pope, Horne Tooke, Francis Hargrave the eminent lawyer, Dr. Schomberg the younger, M.D. (not he of Bath, who lost the good opinion of the people of that city), and other men of known talents, whom I do not at present recollect. Mr. Jackson was a staunch friend to popular freedom long before the French revolution spread its horrors over Europe. Besides the natural love of liberty which characterizes mankind, he caught the flame of freedom from the American revolution.

Soon after the acknowledgment of the independence of our American colonies, he published a work entitled "The Constitutions

of America," with a preface and notes, all laudatory of the political principles on which their independence was founded. He continued his defence of those principles in "The Ledger" and "The Whitehall Evening Post," and often paid me the compliment of reading to me his lucubrations in the latter paper before he sent them to General Oglethorpe, Horne, and other friends.

In "The Public Ledger," he introduced a series of letters under the signature of "CURTIUS," which appeared, to my humble judgment, powerfully written. He seemed to insinuate that they were the production of "JUNIUS;" but he unconsciously betrayed the secret that they were his own, for he asked me if I knew any legal friend who would examine one of these letters, and tell me whether it could be safely published. I told him that I was intimate with Dr. Monsey, who often dined with his old friend Lord Walsingham, formerly Lord Chief-justice De Grey, and that I would request the doctor to submit it to his lordship. When he put the MS. into my hand I saw that it was in his own handwriting, and that there were many erasures and interlineations. Hence I concluded that it must be his own composition; because I inferred that no other author, and particularly Junius, would permit him to take such liberties, and that, indeed, he would not have presumed to do so with the latter. The letter itself was throughout written with great vigour, but with a dangerous freedom, as is evident from the following passage, which I took pains to recollect, because it struck me as surprising that the writer could have a doubt whether it could be safely published. The letter was addressed to a great personage, now no more:—"The people no longer consider your ———'s appetite for blood as the military madness of a boy-monarch who wantons in new-obtained authority, but as the established affection of the full-blown man, serenely savage and deliberately destructive." I took the letter to Dr. Monsey, who carried it to Lord Walsingham. His lordship being then free from all the cares of public employment, kindly perused the letter, and Dr. Monsey told me that this was his lordship's answer: "It is ably written, but it is not Junius; and let the author be told, that if he is a candidate for fine, imprisonment, and the pillory, nobody can dispute his pretensions." The letter, in consequence of this opinion, was never published, and the letters of "CURTIUS," I believe, were no longer continued.

Mr. Jackson was afterward editor of "The Morning Post," during the memorable Westminster scrutiny on the disputed election of Charles Fox. He was adverse to "The Champion of the People," as Mr. Fox's party then styled him. Mr. Jackson allotted a part of "The Morning Post" to an article which he called "The Scrutineer." In this article he varied his attacks upon the Fox party with great force and humour, it sometimes appearing as a proclamation, sometimes as a dialogue, sometimes as a hue-and-cry, and under many other forms, which displayed the fertility of his powers, particularly as the literary hostility continued as long as the scrutiny. The party



was galled, but had not wit, humour, and argument enough to answer him. "The Rolliad" alluded to these attacks, in mentioning—

"The lofty nothings of 'The Scrutineer.'"

but had nothing to say in plain prose.

I remember that the late Mr. Perry, of "The Morning Chronicle," expressed his surprise to me at the vigour and variety of Jackson's powers, as they appeared in "The Scrutineer," though he was a determined Foxite, and therefore likely to speak of it with indifference, if not with affected contempt, as he generally did of every thing that did not appear in his own journal.

I will mention but one anecdote of Mr. Perry, whom I knew upwards of thirty years. On the day after the Earl of Liverpool had stated the grounds of his charges against the late Queen Caroline, I met Mr. Perry in Piccadilly. We stopped, and spoke together in the presence of a mutual acquaintance, whom I do not now recollect. "Well," said I, "Perry, if these charges against the queen are well-founded, the next thing that we shall hear of is, that she has poisoned herself or left the country." His answer, in his Scotch accent, was, "Ah! Jock, Jock, how little you know of that woman! She would pull down the throne of this country, if she were sure to be buried in the ruins." Yet the very next day, and during many following days, "The Morning Chronicle" was filled with praises of her merit, sympathy with her sufferings, and predictions of her triumph.

Mr. Jackson wrote in a very large hand when he wrote for the public press, and procured paper of proportionate magnitude for the purpose.

After the memorable scrutiny already alluded to, Mr. Jackson went abroad, and I lost sight of him for many years. One morning, as I was passing through a narrow new street in Marylebone, I saw a gentleman on the other side of the way who strongly resembled Jackson, but with a cocked-hat and his hair in a queue. I thought I must be mistaken. I remained still, and the gentleman looking at me gravely, crossed the way, took me by the arm, and led me towards the fields. I then found it was Jackson. He asked if I would give him a beefsteak next day, and then he would tell me the reason why he returned to this country. I readily assented, and he came. I took care that nobody should intrude upon the party, and my mother and sister, who were well known to him, dined with us. As I was somewhat indisposed, I took a little brandy and water; and, with the exception of about four glasses of wine drunk by my mother and sister, Jackson actually despatched four bottles without being in the least affected, except with enlivened spirits.

He told me that he returned to England for the purpose of establishing a kind of "Magazin du Mode," consisting, not only of the fashions of France, but of its current literature, to be published in French and English; and he asked me to introduce him to those

who were likely to assist and promote the circulation of the work: The day passed with great pleasantry. Jackson was a great laugher, and spoke with contemptuous merriment of every thing in this country.

"I suppose," said he, "Pitt, Fox, and Burke are thought great men in this country?"

"Certainly," said I.

"Oh! poor, degenerate Britain!" said he, with a hearty laugh. "I suppose, too," he continued, "that the little man" (meaning the elder Boswell), "whom I see trotting about Paris, is reckoned a great writer here?"

I answered that he had written a valuable biography of Dr. Johnson.

He laughed heartily again, exclaiming, "That little, trotting man!—Oh, my God! And your friend Peter Pindar, with his tinkling rhymes, which he calls poetry—I suppose he is considered here as a great poet?"

I answered that I thought he was, though he might give a better direction to his muse.

Then, with another laugh, he said, "I fear I must pity your taste, as well as that of the country."

My sister lived at that time in Queen-Anne-street West, and Jackson and myself attended her home; and highly were we gratified all the way with his unabated spirit and humour. After that night I never saw him, and the next melancholy intelligence which I heard of him was, that he was in custody in Dublin, and was to be tried for high treason.

Before the trial took place, Mrs. Jackson (his second wife) came from Ireland, and called upon me at my house in Hatton Garden. She told me that she came by the desire of her husband, who considered me as a friend not likely to forsake him in adversity, to ask me if I thought government would consent to exchange him for Sir Sydney Smith, who was then confined in the prison of the Temple in Paris, as Mr. Jackson had interest with the French government at that time, and could probably procure the consent of the latter. I apologized to her for giving an unwelcome answer; but said it was my opinion that Sir Sydney Smith, considering himself as a prisoner of war, would most probably refuse to assent to such an exchange, as Mr. Jackson did not stand in a similar predicament. Being a woman of sense, she was not offended at my openness, but seemed to be convinced by what I said, intimating that, in desperate cases, any appearance of a remedy was eagerly adopted.

I saw her no more, except by accident in the street. She was a very fine and intelligent woman. She had two children by Mr. Jackson, the eldest a son, who is a merchant at Florence, with whom the mother resides. The son I have been in company with, and found an intelligent and amiable young man, who, not harbouring French principles, was obliged to quit a mercantile house in Leghorn when the revolutionary troops obtained possession of that place.



Mr. Jackson possessed learning and abilities which would have done honour to the Protestant church. In my opinion, he was a zealot for liberty and the independence of his country, Ireland,—like many others, who had more to sacrifice in the cause than he ever possessed,—and not a rebellious incendiary hostile to the British throne. Such he appeared to many distinguished characters in Dublin, by the long line of carriages which attended his funeral; and such he appears to me, or I should not have paid this humble tribute to the memory of an early and instructive friend. Mr. Jackson wrote an answer to Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny," eloquently opposing the doctor's arguments upon the principles of American independence. He was a great admirer of the works of Dr. Young, and went to Welwyn on purpose to see that celebrated writer, whose "Night Thoughts" he repeated with energetic effect, and his Satires with easy spirit.

Mr. Jackson had an odd species of ironical humour, both in his writing and conversation. Of the former kind, I at present only recollect one instance. In an ironical letter to Lord North, when prime minister, which appeared in "The Ledger," he said, "My lord, the people have such a sense of the blessings of your administration that they long to be near you to testify the gratitude which they feel; but I would not advise you to come among them, lest in the eagerness of their emotions they should tear you to pieces in a transport of joy."

Before he was inflamed by the doctrines of America, and ensnared by those of revolutionary France, he was a zealous friend to the British constitution, and used to characterize Wilkes as "a hackneyed old knave, a demagogue, and a blasphemer, whose patriotism was a pretext, and whose politics were a trade." I trust that I cannot be condemned for introducing in these trifling records an account of an unfortunate gentleman, to whom, in early life, I was indebted for many hours of solid pleasure and instruction, resulting from his learning, knowledge of the world, kindness, and friendship.

---

## CHAPTER LVIII.

GEORGE CHALMERS, Esq. With this gentleman I had many years the pleasure of being acquainted, and hold his memory in much respect. He was chiefly conversant with mercantile and political subjects, but also with works of general literature. He was one of the most indefatigable writers that perhaps ever existed, and subjects that were irksome and difficult to the world at large, might be said to be to him "familiar as his garters." The bullion question, for instance, which was not only puzzling, unintelligible, and repulsive to

others, was a subject which he satisfactorily explained, and rendered as easy to general comprehension as general comprehension would admit. Even my late friend William Gifford, who was as sagacious a man as I ever knew, told me that he wished to understand the bullion question, but honestly declared, that the more he read and studied the subject, the less he understood it, his mind taking a retrograde direction.

Mr. Chalmers had been some years in America, but when I knew him he had a good appointment at the Board of Trade. As a proof of his love for, and knowledge of literary subjects, when young Ireland brought forward his pretended unpublished and unknown works of Shakspeare, he, like Dr. Parr and the elder Boswell, was deceived at first by the imposition. Boswell was so completely duped, that he dropped on his knees, and thanked God that he had lived to see so many indubitable relics of the divine bard. But Mr. Chalmers, upon further search, considered them as fabrications; yet in vindication of himself and others who had been deluded by the imposition, he published an apology for the believers in the supposed Shakspeare manuscripts, books, &c. in which he displayed great research, knowledge, and acumen. He was not a little severe on my friend Mr. Malone, who wrote against the imposition, without having looked at the pretended relics, and who had ridiculed those who had been betrayed into credulity.

Mr. Chalmers wrote many pamphlets on political subjects, chiefly in defence of government and Mr. Pitt's administration; and in all he wrote on those subjects, I am fully persuaded that he acted from the most perfect conviction, and was entirely exempt from any interested bias of gratitude or expectation. His "*Caledonia*" was his great work; three large volumes in quarto have been published, and I believe he had far advanced in the fourth, which would have concluded his labours on that subject. The work, though not finished, must be highly gratifying to the natives of Scotland, and to every admirer of antiquity, as the author had collected and recorded every thing which could illustrate the history, and contribute to the glory of that ancient kingdom.

The various works of Mr. Chalmers are innumerable, and I believe, his most intimate connexions would not be able to trace even a small part of them. But with all his sagacity, judgment, and perseverance, I cannot help thinking he was on some subjects too credulous and hasty in his conclusions. He conceived that Mr. Hugh Boyd, a young Irishman, was the author of "*Junius's Letters*," though not only Boyd's age and condition in life were "strong against the deed," but his avowed works were so different from the style of Junius as to preclude the supposition, though he studied and copied the manner of the great anonymous original. In his comments, however, on the language of Junius, Mr. Chalmers discovered many grammatical errors in those celebrated letters, and gave many strong reasons for believing that the author was an Irishman.



The arguments and citations in a work published by Mr. Taylor, the bookseller, are so strong in favour of Sir Philip Francis as the author, that an eminent law authority is said to have declared, they ought to be admitted in a court of justice; and I heard Mr. Godwin once say, that he should have been convinced by that work, only that he knew Sir Philip Francis had not sufficient ability for such compositions as those celebrated letters.

Among the many reputed authors of that great anonymous work, Burke seems still to hold the ascendancy, and to be the mark of general suspicion. But independently of other reasons, there is, as I have before observed, such an essential character in the expansive and flowery style of Burke in his avowed publications, admitting all his literary merit and political knowledge, as seems to render it impossible for him to have supported one so unlike his own, to such an extent as to maintain it through the whole progress of the "Letters of Junius." As to Burke's voluntary denial to Dr. Johnson, that he was the author of "Junius," I should place no dependence on that declaration, relying on what I have heard of Burke's character, from those who were likely to understand it much better than the multitude.

Another proof of my friend Chalmers's hasty convictions was, his confident belief that Mr. Mathias was the author of "The Pursuits of Literature," insomuch that he actually put an advertisement in the newspapers, positively charging him with being the author, though there was only a rumour that he had been known to have had some hand in it as it passed through the press.

Mr. Chalmers told me that he intended to write a life of Thomson; but he did not live to fulfil his design—a subject of regret, as his inquiring and indefatigable mind would doubtless have produced an interesting biography of one of our greatest poets. Having mentioned to Dr. Wolcot that I had dined with Mr. Chalmers, and also the articles which he possessed that had belonged to Thomson, the doctor, who, like Thomson, saw every thing with a poetical eye, asked me if I had not written something on this subject, and hence I was induced to write the following trifle.

#### TO GEORGE CHALMERS, ESQ.

*The possessor of a table and wine-glasses which belonged to Thomson the poet.*

Friend Chalmers, 'tis a noble treat  
At Thomson's hallow'd board to meet—  
The bard of Nature's sphere—  
The bard whom, long as ages roll,  
And Nature animates the whole,  
Taste, Virtue, will revere.

'Tis surely form'd of Britain's oak,  
That bears her thunder's dreadful stroke  
O'er all her subject main.  
For, lo! Britannia's\* sacred laws,  
And Liberty's\* congenial cause,  
Inspired his patriot strain.

---

\* Poems by Thomson.

Not Arthur's, with his knights around,  
 By fond tradition long renown'd,  
 Should equal thine in fame ;  
 Nor that where plates the Trojans ate,  
 Portentous of a happier fate,  
 Though graced with Virgil's name.

The Poet's goblets, too, are thine,—  
 With votive bumpers let them shine,  
 In Thomson's praise to ring,  
 Whose works through Summer's parching glow,  
 Sear'd Autumn, Winter's blighting snow,  
 Will bloom in endless Spring.

The nephew and namesake of this gentleman paid me the melancholy compliment of inviting me to the funeral of his uncle, which I accepted, willing to show my respect for the memory of a man who, with all his zeal for literature and good government, was chiefly anxious to discover truth, and to promote the happiness of mankind.

The name of Chalmers naturally draws my attention to another friend, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for upwards of forty years, and who is still able to contribute to the benefit of the public by his writings, and by his intrinsic merits to the gratification of his numerous friends.

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, ESQ. This gentleman, by his talents, learning, and social character, has attracted a numerous train of friends, and they are such as are connected with him not merely by convivial intercourse, but by congenial powers and attainments. I have heard that he came from Aberdeen, intending to practise, after receiving due qualifications in that city, the profession of a surgeon in London ; but finding, as the saying is, that "the market was overstocked," he turned his attention to literary pursuits, and soon became well known as a man of talent and learning. He quickly obtained employment among those essential patrons of literature, the booksellers, and innumerable publications issued from his pen.

He has been long known as the editor of "The Biographical Dictionary," in which many of the articles were written by himself. He is also the editor of a collection of the works of the English poets, of most of whom lives are prefixed written by him, but he has modestly introduced all the lives written by Dr. Johnson, though it may truly be said that his own are not less characterized by judgment, certainly more distinguished by industrious research, and perhaps by purer taste and more candid criticism.

The only original work of imagination that I know to have been written by Mr. Alexander Chalmers is a periodical paper, in three volumes, entitled "The Projector," which first appeared successively in numbers, in that venerable and valuable repository of literature, "The Gentleman's Magazine," which Mr. Chalmers afterward collected and published, but to which, with hardly an excusable diffidence, he has declined to prefix his name. This is a work of great humour, and of the purest moral tendency. It abounds with satiri-



cal irony, perhaps to an excess, demonstrating an extraordinary talent for that quality, and always rendering it subservient to a moral purpose.

Mr. Chalmers has published a History of the University of Oxford, in which every thing that taste and judgment could discover has been faithfully illustrated and recorded. During the whole of my long friendship with this gentleman, though occasional sparring matches have passed between us, not the slightest tendency to ill-humour ever appeared on either part; and if there had, it was more likely to have arisen on my side, on account of his powers of conversation, supported by various knowledge, and such an abundant store of anecdotes as few possess, and which none can relate with more point and effect.

I look back with pleasure on the time when we were both young and active, and used to take long walks together, dine at some tavern on our road, adjourn for an hour or two to one of the theatres, and finally end the night at the Turk's Head Coffee-house in the Strand, where we were sure to meet with facetious and intelligent friends; among whom were Mr. George Gordon, a Scotch agent, a gentleman of great wit and humour, and with literary talents of no ordinary rate; the learned and rather *too convivial* Porson; the late Mr. Perry, proprietor of "The Morning Chronicle;" sometimes the elder Boswell; and "though last, not least" in social humour, the facetious Hewardine, who possessed talents which, properly directed, would have rendered him a useful and valuable member of society, but who fell in the prime of life, a sacrifice to the uncontrollable indulgence of convivial excesses.

---

## CHAPTER LIX.

JOHN KING, Esq. In my early days I knew this celebrated character, so well known as the chief agent in his time for money-lenders, and who, being of the Jewish persuasion, was generally styled Jew King. I was acquainted with him for upwards of forty years. I have heard many reflections on his character, but can truly say that I never observed any thing in his conduct, or ever heard him utter a sentiment, that could be injurious to his reputation. He was hospitable and attentive. He was fond of having men of talent at his table, and seemed capable of comprehending and of enjoying whatever fell from them. I introduced Dr. Wolcot to him, and he seemed thoroughly to understand his character and to relish his humour.

The Honourable Mrs. Grattan, sister of Lord Falkland, was one of his visitors, with her brothers, Lord Falkland, and also the Hon-

ourable Charles Carey, afterward Lord Falkland. Musical amateurs were among the parties, who rendered the house an agreeable and elegant receptacle. Cards were seldom introduced, and I never observed that, when they were, there were high stakes or high betting. From all I could observe of Mr. King, I had never the least reason to believe that any of his invitations were for pecuniary purposes. He was extensively concerned in money transactions by all accounts, and chiefly with young Irish noblemen, not much renowned for rectitude,—and if he raised money for them, and they violated their obligations, the odium was thrown upon him; yet, as he carried on this business for the greater part of his life, and still found employment, it may be supposed that the lenders, at least, continued to place confidence in him.

Lady Lanesborough, who appeared as his wife, it is said could not be really so, because he had married early in life, according to the Jewish rites, and the first wife was then alive. It cannot be doubted, however, that he was united to her according to the forms of the Church of England, and I never heard he was disturbed by the claims of the first wife. Lady Lanesborough was a very sensible woman, and very elegant in her manners. She appeared to me exactly to conform to the idea of what is styled a woman of quality. It has been doubted, as I have said, whether she was really married to Mr. King; but, unless the marriage had taken place, it is not to be supposed that he would have been permitted to control her property by her family, particularly by my old friend Mr. Danvers Butler, her son, a very spirited and intelligent man, who lived in King's house, and appeared to be upon the most friendly terms with him.

I became acquainted with Lord Falkland at Mr. King's. He was rather of a grave disposition, but sensible of humour. I was rather more intimate with his brother Charles, a naval officer, who succeeded to the title. The last time I saw him, he told me that he had acquired about 30,000*l.* prize-money, and as we had often talked of taking a beefsteak together, he said that within a fortnight he would fix the day; but, about a week after, I heard the melancholy account of his death in a duel with Mr. Powell, whom he had called "Pogy," and who resented it in him, though it was a nick-name by which he was generally designated among his friends. This last Lord Falkland was a handsome, fine-looking man, good-humoured, and esteemed a very gallant officer.

Mr. Holcroft and Mr. Godwin were frequent visitors at Mr. King's, and other men of talent, whom I do not now remember. Holcroft was inclined to bring forward his philosophical opinions, and was irritable if contradicted; but Godwin was more guarded, and seldom spoke. King sometimes mixed in the conversation with both, and generally made shrewd answers to them.

Mr. King was an able writer on political subjects, and instituted a public journal, the name of which I have forgotten, and which had but a short duration. Lady Lanesborough survived him, and I heard



from one of the family that she fainted on hearing of his death. In the early part of his life he was a great admirer of pugilism, and was esteemed a good boxer. When I first knew Mr. King, he used after dinner to introduce Humphrey, his foot-boy, and spar with him. Humphrey derived the rudiments of his art from his master. King was always his friend when he became a pugilist by profession.

Lady Lanesborough had a daughter as well as a son by her first husband, who had been many years married before I had the pleasure of being introduced to her. She was styled the Marchioness of Mariscotti; and among all my acquaintance with the female sex she was one of the most amiable and interesting women I ever knew. There was an ingenuous simplicity in her manners that seemed almost to approach to the innocence of childhood, only that her good sense, knowledge, and accomplishments were thoroughly accordant with her time of life and her rank.

My old friend Mr. Brooke, whose knowledge of life could rarely be equalled, used to characterize this lady by the epithet of "guileless," and never, I believe, was an epithet more appropriate. Mr. Butler, her brother, took the addition of Danvers to his name, having married an heiress of considerable fortune of that name. I was introduced to her, but my acquaintance with her was very short, as she died soon after. She appeared to be an amiable domestic character. She left one son, with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, but I shall say no more than that I respect him for his manners and character.

Mr. King, during my long acquaintance with him, experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. I have sometimes seen him riding in his carriage with Lady Lanesborough and his family, and other times trudging through the streets arm-in-arm with her in very indifferent weather. He was a remarkably good-humoured man, and I never heard a splenetic word from him. I have understood that when any of his literary friends have not been successful in their publications, he has purchased many copies of their works, to distribute gratuitously among his connexions.

I know that Mr. King's character was the subject of severe animadversions, but as all I observed of him was creditable to him, I will not be deterred from paying this tribute to his memory, as I have enjoyed many pleasant hours at his table, but had no other obligation to him than what I derived from the accomplished and intelligent society which I met at his hospitable mansion.

I must not forget to mention the second wife of Mr. Butler Danvers, previously Miss Sturt, and the sister of my friend Captain Sturt, R.N. She was beautiful in her person, engaging in her manners, and, though accustomed to all the splendour and gayeties of fashionable life, was unaffected, cheerful, and possessed every domestic virtue calculated

Well-ordered home man's chief delight to make.

The Honourable MRS. GRATTAN, sister of Lord Falkland, whom I have mentioned as one of the visitors to Lady Lanesborough and Mr. King, was very handsome, and an intelligent woman ; but, different from handsome women in general, she seemed to be regardless of the influence of her person, and rather desirous to strike by her understanding and accomplishments. She was very fond of music, and by great labour was able to perform two or three concertos on the piano-forte, but did not seem to possess any genius for music, or much taste. She was strongly impregnated with the pride of birth, but was by no means deficient in common sense. She thought that she possessed dramatic talents, and sent me a play of her writing, desiring my judgment. I honestly gave my opinion, which was by no means favourable, and she paid me the compliment of suppressing it.

I am chiefly induced to mention this lady in order to show, that with all the consciousness of her rank, and all the pride of her attainments, finding her income not sufficient to support herself in this country, she had the good sense to stoop from her elevation and leave England, and go to America, or one of our West India islands, where she opened a milliner's shop and died in obscurity, but not without obtaining respect for character and conduct. She was one of the first persons who patronized the talents of the late Mr. Davy, the musical composer, from whom she received lessons, as well as from Mr. Jackson, generally styled Jackson of Exeter, who had originally been a portrait-painter, but renounced that profession in favour of music, in which his genius and taste were justly admired, particularly in the compositions which he adapted to works of Hammond, Lord Lyttelton, and Dr. Wolcot. His latest compositions were chiefly confined to the lyric works of Dr. Wolcot, with whom he had long been in habits of friendship and confidence.

I became acquainted with him at the house of the late Mr. Opie, the celebrated painter. Mr. Jackson possessed an excellent understanding, and literary talents of no ordinary description. If he had devoted himself wholly to literary pursuits, he would probably have rendered himself conspicuous by his profound knowledge of the world. His work entitled "Thirty Letters on various Subjects," is highly creditable to his talents and knowledge of human nature. He presented it to me, as well as several of his musical pieces set to the words of Dr. Wolcot. He was a tall, good-looking man, with an expressive face, and a reserved and grave demeanour. He appeared to me to be well acquainted with history, and with the opinions of the ancient philosophers. His talents as a painter, I understand, were by no means first-rate, but, according to the report of Mr. Opie and Dr. Wolcot, he was an admirable judge of painting.

It is said that he was austere in his domestic character, and something of that disposition was observable in his general intercourse with society. Indeed, his burying himself at Exeter, when he might have been conspicuous in the metropolis, may be considered as a proof



that he was of a retired, if not of a saturnine cast of mind. He was one of the very few men whom Doctor Wolcot, a shrewd judge of mankind, regarded with particular respect for his intellectual powers; and another was Dr. Whitaker, the historian of Manchester, and who engaged in the controversy respecting the character of Mary Queen of Scots. The latter told Wolcot that he envied him the power of making people laugh by his writings, which he said he had often attempted to do in his own, but had never succeeded.

Whitaker was also a man who confined himself to the country, though eminently qualified by his powers and acquirements for a more distinguished sphere of action. The wisest men are not exempted from pride, and though he held the situation of organist in Exeter, Jackson was offended if he heard himself mentioned as "Mr. Jackson, the organist." He was unaffected in his manners, but took no pains to please in company, and seemed indifferent as to what impression he was likely to make, as if his opinions were settled, and he was not disposed to enter into any controversy in support of them.

Mr. Davy, a native also of Exeter, was a man of great musical talents, which he discovered very early, and in a singular manner, as has been stated in several accounts. His music to the opera of "The Blind Boy" is a striking proof of his science and taste. I became acquainted with him soon after he came from Exeter, and was settled in London. He was a good performer on the piano-forte, and an able teacher. When I first knew him, he was somewhat of a beau; and his hair was always well powdered, but he fell into an unfortunate habit of drinking, and became at last so negligent of his person as to be really offensive. Of course he lost his scholars, particularly females, and was at length reduced to very great distress, and was chiefly supported by the casual contributions of those acquaintances whom he happened to meet, or whose residence he could discover.

Musical professors in general are very kind to any of their community who are in distress, and I have been informed that several of them subscribed to provide a decent interment for poor Davy, otherwise he would probably have been buried at the expense of the parish.

---

## CHAPTER LX.

**LORD BYRON.** I became acquainted with this nobleman in the green-room of Drury-lane theatre, at a time when he was one of the committee of management, and, as well as I can recollect, I was introduced to him by Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, who was also a member

of the same body. He had so little the appearance of a person above the common race of mankind that, as lawyers were concerned in the affairs of that theatre, I took him for one of that profession, or a clerk; nor when I first saw his features, before I was introduced to him, did I perceive any of that extraordinary beauty which has since been ascribed to him; but soon after, knowing who he was, and gratified by the politeness of his manner, I began to see "Othello's visage in his mind," and, if I did not perceive the reported beauty, I thought I saw striking marks of intelligence, and of those high powers which constituted his character.

I had but little intercourse with him in the green-room; and as a proof how slight an impression his features made upon me, I was sitting in one of the boxes at the Haymarket theatre, the partition of the boxes only dividing me from a person in the next box, who spoke to me, and as I did not know who he was, he told me he was Lord Byron. I was much pleased with his condescension in addressing me, though vexed that I did not recollect him; and I then paid more attention to him than to the performance on the stage. We conversed for some time in a low tone, that we might not annoy the people around us, and I was highly gratified in leaving all the talk to his lordship, consistent with the necessity of an occasional answer. I then took care to examine his features well, that, being near-sighted in some degree, I might not forget him.

I still think that the beauty of his features has been much exaggerated, and that the knowledge of his intellectual powers, as manifested in his works, has given an impression to the mind of the observer which would not have been made upon those who saw him without knowing him. The portraits by my friends Mr. Westall and Mr. Phillips are the best likenesses that I have seen of him; and the prints from other artists have very little resemblance, though some of them have been confidently bruited to the world.

I was in the habit of visiting the green-rooms of both theatres, but went oftener to Drury-lane, in order to cultivate an acquaintanceship with Lord Byron, who always received me with great kindness; and particularly one night when I had returned from a public dinner and met him in the green-room, though I had by no means drunk much wine, yet, as I seemed to him to be somewhat heated and appeared to be thirsty, he handed me a tumbler of water, as he said to *dilute* me. Having a short time before published a small volume of poems, I sent them to his lordship, and in return received the following letter from him, with four volumes of his poems, handsomely bound, all of his works that had been published at that time. I took the first sentence of the letter as a motto for a collection of poems which I have since published.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have to thank you for a volume in the good old style of our elders and our betters, which I am very glad to see not yet extinct.



Your good opinion does me great honour, though I am about to risk its loss by the return I make for your valuable present. With many acknowledgments for your wishes, and a sincere sense of your kindness, believe me,

“Your obliged and faithful servant,

“BYRON.

“13 Piccadilly Terrace, July 23, 1815.”

In addition to this kind and flattering letter, his lordship inscribed the first volume in the following terms :

“TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

“With the author’s compliments and respects,

“July 23d, 1815.”

His lordship’s volumes, his gratifying letter, and the kind attention which I received from him in the green-room induced me to express my thanks in a complimentary sonnet to him, which was inserted in “The Sun” newspaper, of which I was then the proprietor of nine-tenths. The remaining tenth share was to belong to a gentleman, when the profits of that share should amount to a sum which was the assigned price of each share, and at which price I purchased, by degrees, all my shares. By the oversight of the attorney employed, the gentleman alluded to, during the previous proprietorship, was invested with the sole and uncontrolled editorship of the paper, under such legal forms that even the proprietors could not deprive him of his authority. When the former two proprietors, of whom one was the founder of the paper, found into what a predicament they had been thrown, they signified their wishes to withdraw from the concern, and I purchased their respective shares, in addition to what I had bought before at a considerable expense, conceiving that the editor would relax from his authority, and that we should proceed in harmony together. But I was mistaken, and after much and violent dissension between us, I was at last induced to offer him 500*l.* to relinquish all connexion with the paper, which sum he accepted, and it then became entirely my own.

During his control over the paper, the day after my sonnet addressed to Lord Byron appeared, the editor thought proper to insert a parody on my lines in “The Sun” newspaper, in which he mentioned Lord Byron in severe terms, and in one passage adverted to Lady Byron. Shocked and mortified at the insertion of this parody in a paper almost entirely my own, I wrote immediately to Lord Byron, explaining my situation, and expressing my sincere regret that such an article had appeared in the paper, and stating my inability to prevent it. My letter produced the following one from his lordship, which I lent to my friend Mr. Moore, and which he has inserted in his admirable life of the noble bard.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am sorry that you should feel uneasy at what has by no means troubled me. If your editor, his correspondents, and readers are amused, I have no objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can find room for, provided his lucubrations are confined to me only. It is a long time since things of this kind have ceased to 'fright me from my propriety,' nor do I know any similar attack which would induce me to turn again, unless it involved those connected with me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt them, even in the eyes of those who bear no good will to myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur, to *reverse* the saying of Dr. Johnson, 'What the law cannot do for me, I would do for myself,' be the consequences what they might. I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the letters. The poems I hope you intend me to keep, at least I shall do so till I hear the contrary.

"Very truly yours,

"BYRON.

"13 Terrace, Piccadilly, Sept. 25th, 1815."

In a subsequent letter from his lordship to me, referring to the same subject, there is the following postscript. "P.S. Your best way will be to publish no more eulogies, except upon the 'elect;' or if you do, to let him (the editor) have a previous copy, so that the compliment and attack may appear together, which would, I think, have a good effect."

The last letter is dated Oct. 27th, 1815, more than a month after the other, so that it is evident the subject dwelt upon his lordship's mind, though in the postscript he has treated it jocularly. The letter dated Sept. 25th is interesting, because it shows, that though his lordship was indifferent to any attacks on himself, he was disposed to come resolutely, if not rashly, forward in defence of Lady Byron, of whose amiable qualities he could not but be deeply sensible, and it is therefore a lamentable consideration, that a separation should have taken place between persons so eminently qualified to promote the happiness of each other.

Before her marriage, Lady Byron was the theme of universal esteem and admiration to all who had the pleasure of being acquainted with her, and there can be no doubt that in her matrimonial state she fully maintained her pretensions to the same favourable estimation, though untoward circumstances, unfortunately too common in conjugal life, may have occasioned the melancholy event of a separation.

I remember that soon after the marriage I dined with Mrs. Siddons, and I know no person who was better able to appreciate character, and to pay due homage to personal worth, than that lady. Referring to the recent marriage, she said, "If I had no other reason to admire the judgment and taste of Lord Byron, I should be fully convinced of both by his choice of a wife."

It is impossible to review the character and talents of Lord Byron



without entertaining a high respect for his memory. That he possessed strong passions is too evident; but they were accompanied by a generous and forgiving disposition, as my friend Mr. Moore's valuable life of him demonstrates. His poetical powers, though certainly of a high order, have perhaps, like the beauty of his person, been represented in too favourable a light. They were chiefly of a satirical and descriptive kind. He could draw characters with great force and beauty, as well those of masculine and ferocious energy as of female softness, delicacy, and exquisite feeling; but perhaps if we were to search in his works for that species of poetical excellence which is denominated the sublime, and which is the essence of true poetry, we should be disappointed.

I feel somewhat abashed at thus venturing to criticise the works of so popular a writer; but much as I respect his memory, and feel sensible of his kindness to me, I may be permitted to express my opinion, considering the high reputation which he acquired, and the great poets who do honour to the literary character of the country, and whose names seem to have sunk into comparative oblivion.

As Lord Byron made so conspicuous a figure in society, and will always remain so in the literary world, it may not be an incurious speculation to reflect on what he might have been if he had not been born to rank and affluence. That he possessed great poetical talents, nobody can deny; and it must be equally admitted that he was born with strong passions. It is hardly to be doubted, that whatever had been the condition of his parents, they would have discovered uncommon qualities of mind in him, and would have afforded him as good an education as their means would have allowed. Born in humble life, he would not have been exposed to the flattery of sycophants, which always surround the inheritor of title and wealth, and his talents would have taken the direction which nature might have suggested, and his passions have been restrained from extravagance and voluptuousness. He would have been free from the provocation of captious criticism, and therefore would probably have employed his muse in description, sentiment, and reflection, rather than in satire and licentiousness.

That Lord Byron was generous and affectionate, is evident from Mr. Moore's masterly biographical work; and this temper, influenced by his situation among persons in ordinary life, would probably have operated with benevolence and philanthropy. His faults may therefore be conceived to have been the consequence of the rank in which he was born, and the allurements, as well as provocations, to which he was exposed. It has been said that the deformity of his foot contributed to sour his temper; but if he had been obliged to support himself by his talents, his chagrin on that account might have passed from him "like dew-drops from the lion's mane." In my opinion Lord Byron was naturally a kind, good-hearted, and liberal-minded man; and, as far as he was otherwise, it was the unavoidable result of the rank to which he was born, and its incidental temptations.

## CHAPTER LXI.

**THE EARL OF ELDON.** The first time that I had the honour of being introduced to this venerable nobleman was when he was Mr. Scott, an eminent barrister, and so easy and unaffected in his manners that he was generally designated with the name of Jack Scott by his brethren of the bar. His early friend, Mr. Richard Wilson, for some reason generally styled Dick Wilson, gave a dinner, and by desire of Mr. Alderman Skinner, Mr. Scott, and Mr. Joseph Richardson were particularly invited, and I was one of the party, with other friends. The object of Mr. Skinner was, if possible, to engage Mr. Scott and Mr. Richardson to take opposite sides in any subject that might happen to occur, though it was hardly possible, considering the rate of Mr. Skinner's intellects, and the extent of his attainments, that he was likely to derive much advantage from the controversy, if it happened to fall within the reach of his capacity.

Mr. Richardson had been let into the secret, and therefore, before the company assembled, Mr. Richardson took me aside, complimented me on my prolific power of talking nonsense, and requested that I would endeavour, by the introduction of any flippant facetiousness, to prevent the expected disputation, observing that Mr. Scott was a practised logician, and likely to be the conqueror if a difference of opinion should arise; but it was probable that they might concur in sentiment, and that at all events, as the meeting was for the purpose of general good-humour, it would be absurd to introduce topics in the discussion of which the company in general were not likely to engage. I endeavoured to justify my friend Richardson's compliment on my genius for nonsense, succeeded in spreading harmless merriment, and thereby obviated all prospect of controversial emulation. But this state of things interfered so much with the worthy alderman's design, that he took me aside, told me that as I was a young man just entering into the world, and as he had risen to a distinguished station in society, it might be in his power to render me service; he then unfolded the object of the meeting, which he requested I would endeavour to forward, rather than retard, and assured me that, by the contention between two such able men as Mr. Scott and Mr. Richardson, I should improve by their respective arguments. I affected to assent, but, not being ambitious of the patronage of the civic sage, I soon resumed the same flippant gayety, and being a bit of a singer in those days, gave the company a Bacchanalian air, which, on account of its jovial sentiments, not my musical merit, was encored, and such a spirit of convivial merriment ensued, that the worthy magistrate gave up all hopes of argumental improvement in despair, and retired. The rest of the company followed him by degrees, and at length nobody was left but Mr. Scott, myself, and our hospitable landlord.



I remember that, inspired by Bacchus, rather than by the Cumæan sybil, as Mr. Scott sat on a sofa, I felt a prophetic glow, and said, "There sits an embryo chancellor." Mr. Scott laughed at my jovial prediction, and required a repetition of my song; and, as Mr. Wilson tells me, for I confess I recollect no more, Mr. Scott arose from the sofa, and placing himself at the door, declared that I should not depart till I had repeated the song. From that time the noble lord has favoured me with his kind attention, and when I have had the pleasure of meeting him, has sometimes referred to our merry meeting, and my prophetic inspiration.

Often has he favoured me with his arm when we happened to be walking the same way; and I must indulge myself in the pride of stating that in the tea-room, where the company assembled after the last celebration, in 1829, of Mr. Pitt's birth-day, he greeted me with his usual kindness, and said in the hearing of the company, that he should be glad to see me whenever I would call upon him. His noble brother, Lord Stowell, whom I had first the pleasure of meeting at the elegant table of Sir Joshua Reynolds, has honoured me ever since with the same condescending affability; and it is with pride and gratitude I add that they were both liberal subscribers to the volumes of poems which I published by the advice and under the patronage of a numerous host of subscribers, many of whom were of high rank, His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex at the head, and the whole list constituting such an honourable testimony in favour of my character, as might, in a great degree, compensate for the frowns of fortune.

**THE EARL OF COVENTRY.** I have had the pleasure of ranking this nobleman among my early friends, and many happy days have I passed at his hospitable table, in company with his amiable countess, their accomplished daughters, and the lively and intelligent male branches of the family. My first acquaintance with his lordship was within a few years after he was deprived of sight. He consulted my father, the most eminent oculist of his day, but the case unfortunately admitted not of a remedy, and his lordship has uniformly borne this lamentable deprivation with philosophic fortitude and resignation.

Lord Coventry was educated at Westminster school, and when Dr. Smith, then head-master, was asked who had been the most promising of his scholars in his time, he said that he could have no doubt or hesitation in saying the Earl of Coventry, then Lord Deerhurst. The chief amusement of the noble lord, since his unfortunate loss of sight, has been the composition of Latin verses, and in translating English poetry into the Latin language.

**MR. SAMUEL FOOTE.** This celebrated character, who was conspicuous as an author as well as an actor, figured on the stage of life before I became at all connected with the theatrical world, except as a mere spectator. I have, however, often seen him act, and have a full recollection of his manner. He performed the characters written by and for himself in his own dramas with admirable humour

and effect, and far beyond any of his successors, though some of them, particularly the elder Bannister, imitated his manner with great success. His voice was harsh and unequal, and if now imitated in private life, it would be difficult to believe that it ever could have been endured on the stage; but the public had been used to it, and his intrepid confidence and spirit were powerfully effective.

I have seen him perform *Fondlewife* in "The Old Bachelor," and Gomez in "The Spanish Friar;" but his manner was by no means suited to the regular drama, though his good sense and broad humour rendered him very entertaining. He was vain, and always wished to be more forward on the stage than any of his fellow-performers; and as he was the manager, they of course submitted to appear rather in the background. If he had not possessed so much dramatic ability, and the stage had been his only resource, he must have been contented with a very subordinate situation on the public boards, if, indeed, he had been tolerated at all.

I have been surprised that my old friend Arthur Murphy should have entertained so high an opinion of Foote as a wit, since there are very few proofs of such original jocularly as might be expected, considering he had acquired so high a reputation for *bons mots* and repartees. I have often wished there had been some record of that facetious fecundity which rendered Foote's conversational powers so entertaining to people of all ranks, for those sallies of his inexhaustible humour which have reached public notice, by no means afford such samples of original wit as to give adequate support to his high reputation; and I conceive that his dramatic works may be considered as the chief foundation of his intellectual character. For my part, such has been my ill-luck, that I have been generally disappointed when I have come into the company of professed wits.

Mr. Murphy never used to mention him without styling him the great, the famous, or the celebrated Mr. Foote; and we also find these epithets applied to him by Mr. Murphy in his *Life of Garrick*. Mr. Murphy had often signified his intention to write a life of Foote, and during my long intimacy with him I have heard him repeat all the *bons mots* and odd remarks of this "Mr. Merryman." Well remembering these good things, as they were deemed, I communicated them to my friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, who had collected many more, and who has since given them to the public in his *Life of Foote*. I have recently looked over them, in order to see if I could recover any of them for my own use, but did not think them worth the transfer.

It was Foote's constant aim to make the servants leave the room laughing, wherever he visited; and it may easily be conceived that the jokes must be of a very coarse nature that were inspired by such a grovelling ambition. Soon after he became settled, he sent for his wife, from whom he had been separated many years, and desired Mr. Costello, an actor who valued himself upon his skill as a driver, to bring her in a one-horse chaise, a common vehicle at that time, to his house at Blackheath. Costello, with all his skill, overturned the



chaise, and poor Mrs. Foote fell with her face upon some hard gravel, which disfigured her so much that she was obliged to put on a veil.

When the company who were expected to dinner arrived, Foote told them of her disaster, and sacrificing humanity and even decency for a joke, pulled aside her veil, and said he would show them "a map of the world." He then said, pointing to the several bruises on her face, "There is the yellow Ganges, here is the Red Sea," and, after more allusions of the same kind, concluded with touching her forehead, and adding, "Here are the rocks of Scilly."

A day or two after the death of his wife, he dined with a party, and affected to weep for his loss; but his weeping was intended to have a ludicrous effect upon the servants, and to complete the joke he said that he had been all the morning seeking for "a second-hand coffin to bury her in." This declaration was irresistible upon the servants, and having thus accomplished his purpose, he was as facetious as ever through the remainder of the day.

These may be considered as samples of his general pretensions to the character of a wit. Yet he must have had some power of diverting, since even Dr. Johnson, in spite of his predetermination to maintain a sullen silence, was obliged to give way to Foote's overbearing "broad-faced" merriment.

Dr. Johnson having heard that Foote had called him "a learned Hottentot," the doctor in return styled him "a pleasant villain."

That Foote was a good scholar was universally admitted, and a good dramatic writer must also be acknowledged; but his works were chiefly attractive from their impudent personality, and his whimsical exhibition of characters drawn by himself, and for his own peculiar talents.

I was surprised also that there should have been so great an intimacy between Murphy and Foote, considering the difference of their characters. Murphy was very grave, and never attempted wit, but was successful in relating the wit of others. Foote was never grave, but always on the watch for something to excite a jest; and as he had no regard for friendship, morality, or decency, Murphy must have been his butt as well as all his other friends.

I believe that Mr. Murphy relinquished the intention to write Foote's life, on account of the charge that was brought against him, for I have heard him say that he believed Foote was guilty. He added, that it would be a difficult task to get over; "but," said he, "if I should ever write his life, I should be contented with saying, that he was acquitted by a jury of his countrymen." The life, however, has been ably written by Mr. Cooke, who has brought forward every thing that could tend to do honour to his hero, but has still supported his own character as an impartial biographer.

Foote's manner of relating a humorous story, with his powers of mimicry, must doubtless have been very entertaining to those who were not too refined for fun, or too delicate for buffoonery. Mr. Murphy used to relate the following story of Foote's, the heroines of

which were the Ladies Cheere, Fielding, and Hill, the last the widow of the celebrated Dr. Hill. He represented them as playing at "I love my love with a letter." Lady Cheere began and said, "I love my love with an N, because he is a Night;" Lady Fielding followed with "I love my love with a G, because he is a Gustis; and "I love my love with an F," said Lady Hill, "because he is a Fizishun." Such was the imputed orthography of these learned ladies.

Foote never was able to bear the charge that was brought against him, which certainly hastened his end; for though he affected to keep up his spirits, on his return to the stage Mr. Cooke says that he exhibited a lamentable decay, both in mind and person. Peace to his manes!

---

## CHAPTER LXII.

WILLIAM COOKE, Esq. This gentleman, whom I have mentioned in the previous article, was one of my early friends. He came from Cork, after having been engaged in a mercantile concern contrary to his inclination, and arrived in London in the year 1766. He was married when very young to a lady rather older than himself, who possessed good property, but, as they mixed in all the gayeties of fashionable life, it was soon dissipated. The lady lived about two years after the marriage; and his purpose in visiting London, soon after her death, was to adopt the profession of the law. He entered himself of the Middle Temple, and in due time was called to the bar; but finding little encouragement to pursue the profession which he had chosen, wholly devoted himself to the labours of the pen. He had brought from Ireland letters of recommendation to Dr. Goldsmith, to Edmund Burke, and his brother Richard. With Dr. Goldsmith he retained an intimacy till the death of that excellent writer; but notwithstanding his high admiration of Edmund Burke's powers, he had no confidence in his integrity, or that of his brother Richard, and having been nearly involved in a heavy debt by the latter, he did not cultivate a connexion with either.

Mr. Cooke's first publication was a poem entitled "The Art of Living in London," which contained a good description of the manners of the time, and some useful precepts for avoiding its dangers. His friend Goldsmith supplied the title of this poem and revised the whole. It was very successful, and soon went through a second edition. He then published a work, entitled "Elements of Dramatic Criticism," and wrote many political pamphlets, under the patronage of the Duke of Richmond and Lord Shelburn, afterward Marquis of Lansdowne.

Mr. Cooke was well acquainted with the chief wits of the time;



and when Dr. Johnson formed his Essex-street club, he nominated Mr. Cooke as the first member.

Mr. Cooke was employed in reporting the debates in the House of Lords, and in the India House, for the public journals. He was also a theatrical reporter, and became a proprietor in a daily newspaper, but soon sold his share from a conviction of the uncertainty of that kind of property. He was married to his second wife before I became acquainted with him. She was a handsome and very amiable lady. By her he had fifteen children, but most of them died young; the last a daughter, who reached her fifteenth year, and then sunk into the grave with the rest.

Mr. Cooke was a warm friend of Mrs. Abington. He altered for her the comedy of "The Capricious Lady," originally written by Beaumont and Fletcher, and she increased her reputation by appearing as the heroine of the piece. By his connexion with the public press, he was able to give support to her professional exertions. Mrs. Abington was much alive to public notice, and peculiarly fearful of critical censure.

Mr. Cooke's last work was a didactic poem, entitled "Conversation," in which he enumerates the merits and defects of colloquial intercourse, with critical acumen, and knowledge of mankind. This poem he dedicated to his old friend John Symmons, Esq. of Paddington, whose character he introduced under the name of Florio. I had for many years the pleasure of being intimate with Mr. Symmons; and a more liberal, elegant, and hospitable character never existed. He is still alive, at a very advanced age, and with a reverse of fortune, which all who knew him must deeply regret; as it was chiefly the result of the generosity, I may say, the magnificence of his mind, his confidence in false friends, and an incautious disposal of his property. He found it necessary to leave England, and I fear is involved in the unhappy events which now overwhelm the Netherlands, to which country he has retired, and where he intended to pass the remainder of his life.

THE REV. CHARLES SYMMONS, D.D. This gentleman was the brother of the respected friend whom I have just mentioned. His learning and poetical talents are so well known, that it would be presumptuous in me to pay homage to merits generally acknowledged, and which I cannot pretend to appreciate. I was introduced to him at the hospitable table of his brother, and have been very often a happy guest at his own. He was a friend to mankind, but perhaps, considering his sacred calling, too free in the manifestation of his political principles. These principles are evident in his "Life of Milton," and in his other works. They were also avowed in sermons which he delivered from the pulpit. It is not to be supposed that he wished for a republic, for he was firmly attached to the British constitution, and proud of the friendship of His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, who may justly be ranked among the friends of mankind, as well as an admirer of that unrivalled constitution which seated his family on the throne of this country.

The late Mr. Windham was a friend of Dr. Symmons, and was anxious to advance him in the church; but the doctor's open avowal of his political principles prevented Mr. Windham from being as active in his cause as he expected, and in consequence a languor fell upon their friendship. The doctor's pretensions to preferment were of the most solid kind, in point of learning and moral conduct; and he might have been raised to high ecclesiastical dignities if he had not been so solicitous to appear as a patriot and a politician. He published a volume of poems, written by himself and one of his daughters, who died in the bloom of life, and which are highly creditable to the taste and genius of both.

His translation of the "*Æneid*," a work of great learning and poetical merit, was first published in a quarto volume, but soon reached to a second edition, which appeared in two volumes octavo. He paid me the unmerited compliment of sending to me the proofs of every book, as they came from the press, of which I did not presume to judge as a translation, but merely ventured occasionally to suggest some alterations in the English version. When the second edition was published, I introduced a succession of observations on the whole in "*The Sun*" newspaper, of which I was then the proprietor. These observations were so satisfactory to the doctor as to excite such a tribute of gratitude as I am at once proud and ashamed to record. Yet I might well be suspected of false modesty if I were to suppress such a testimony in my favour from so distinguished a scholar and so excellent a poet. I shall therefore venture to insert the conclusion of the preface to the second edition of his translation of the "*Æneid*," regretting that I do not deserve such commendation, yet highly gratified at having received so honourable and flattering a tribute of partial friendship.

After having referred to the charge brought against him by certain critics, who had spoken unfavourably of his work, of having Latinized too much, he concludes in the following words:—"But I must withdraw even from the shadow of controversy the remaining portion of my small sheet (the preface), that I may consecrate it to the better feelings of my heart. Let me now, then, say that there is a public writer, of extended celebrity throughout the political and the literary world, to whom my thankfulness is largely due, and to whom I am happy in this opportunity of avowing the magnitude of my obligation. Acquainted with me, originally, by my publications, and conciliated by his partial estimation of their merits, the proprietor of "*THE SUN*" paper has uniformly encouraged me with his plaudit; and in the circulation of his popular pages my name has been agitated into life. Unfed and unsolicited, without the hope of any other recompense than that which he derived from his own approbation; and, let me add, with a high disdain of that party spirit which in these bad days has arrayed man against man, and torn brother from brother, he has devoted, not his paragraphs, but his columns, to the display of my poor muse; and has hazarded the established reputation of his own



literary judgment, while he has been placing wreaths upon her un-respected brow. For all this kindness,

——— ‘Grates persolvere dignas  
Non opis est nostræ.’

“If in the train of the Mantuan Bard I could hope to visit posterity, it would be gratifying to think that, by eyes yet withheld by interposing centuries from the light, this small record of my gratitude would be read, and the name of JOHN TAYLOR be seen thus closely associated with that of

“CHARLES SYMMONS.

“March 20, 1820.”

There are several living friends whom I would introduce with pleasure in this work, but as justice and gratitude might be imputed to very different motives, I fear to mention them; I cannot, however, deny myself the gratification of acknowledging the kindness of John Soane, Esq., the celebrated architect, and of Prince Hoare, Esq.; who kindly came forward to cheer me in the time of unexpected adversity, and manifested such condoling sympathy and such zealous friendship, as I must always gratefully remember, though I can never hope to return.

The present work has been written in a desultory manner, with several intervals occasioned by illness, which, at one time, was of so alarming a description that my friend Mr. Cooke, and another eminent surgeon, thought it hardly possible that I should recover. I might easily have extended it, but was tired of the task, and was urged to conclude it by my friends, who cherished such hopes of its success as I fear will be disappointed. I am now at a very advanced age, and though I have no reason to believe that my mind has decayed as well as my corporeal strength, yet I cannot help agreeing with the opinion of David Hume, who says, “I consider that a man at sixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities;” and if it had been my fate to leave the world at that period of my life, I should not only have escaped infirmities, but disappointments, vexations, and sorrows.

To borrow the words of Dr. Johnson, in the last paper of his admirable Rambler, “that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant.” And indeed, such must inevitably be the case; for I am not to coin words, and if I am describing tempers, qualities, talents, and persons of a similar nature, I must of course make use of similar epithets and forms of expression.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

DR. ARNOLD. The name of Colman leads me to our old friend, who was so long an ornament of the musical world, and, by the general estimation of his professional merits, was a man of great genius, as well as profound in musical science. In private life he was humorous, intelligent, and convivial. Our acquaintance began so early in my life that I cannot recollect its origin. His numerous musical works sufficiently attest his genius and his knowledge. The first production, I believe, which brought his talents into notice was a song, which began "If 'tis joy to wound a lover." These words were adapted to so lively an air that it was on everybody's tongue, and was printed on ladies' fans and many other articles likely to extend its popularity.

Dr. Arnold was well acquainted with the world, and always took an active, spirited, and agreeable part in conversation. I was once happy enough to be instrumental in removing a slight but temporary difference between him and his friend Colman. This transient pause in their friendship was occasioned by the introduction of Mr. Storace into the Haymarket theatre as the composer of "The Iron Chest," Dr. Arnold having for many years been the settled composer for that house. The doctor consulted me on the subject, and condescended to adopt my advice, when cordiality was soon restored between the two friends.

Dr. Arnold introduced me to Sir John Oldmixon, grandson of the famous Mr. Oldmixon, the bitter adversary of Pope, and victim of the relentless poet. Sir John and I became very intimate, and he introduced me to his mother at Cheshunt. Miss Oldmixon had married a Mr. Morella, a musician, who died and left one son, who was in due time an officer in the army. As the Oldmixons were an ancient family who gave their name to a town, young Morella obtained permission to change his to that of his grandfather, and was knighted (I believe) by the Duke of Portland, when viceroy in Ireland.

Sir John was a lively companion, and inherited his father's love of music, performing tolerably well on the violin. His mother was tall and stately, and had doubtless been a fine woman. Her manners were very courteous, but had something of the formality of Queen Anne's court.

Pope became the subject of conversation, and I was surprised to find her speak with so much liberality of a man who had been so bitter an enemy of her father. I stopped but one night with them at Cheshunt, and never saw her afterward. I heard no tradition respecting either Pope or her father.



Sir John had figured among the *beau monde* at Bath, where his figure was introduced in a print called "The Long Dance;" and also at Brighton, where he was first noticed by his late majesty when Prince of Wales, and distinguished among some amateur actors of the higher orders. He afterward married Miss George, an actress and singer of the Haymarket theatre. They subsequently went to America, where she displayed her theatrical talents; and he who had been so great a beau in this country turned market-gardener in America, and used to drive his own cart, with vegetables, to the market, dropping his knighthood. I understood that, in consequence of his wife's conduct, he obtained a divorce. He returned to this country, and eagerly renewed his intercourse with me; but after two or three meetings at a tavern, and one in the street, I saw him no more, and never heard what had become of him.

To return to my friend Dr. Arnold: I lost in him an agreeable old friend, who, however, had introduced his son to me when just passed his "boyish days," and whose talents are too well known to require more from me than to say that I consider him as a legacy of friendship, which I shall always value on his own account, as well as for the respect which I bear to the memory of his father.

WILLIAM GIFFORD, Esq. Considering my long friendship with this gentleman, which subsisted for upwards of forty years, it would be strange, indeed, if I did not give him a place in the account of my recollections. He has given so interesting and affecting a history of his life, that nothing can be added to that narrative of his early difficulties, and the manner in which they were surmounted.

I was first introduced to him by the Rev. William Peters, R.A. and chaplain to the Royal Academy. Unfortunately a difference arose between these old friends, which was followed by mutual and unappeasable hostility. Mr. Peters, as I have before stated, accused Gifford of having supplanted him in the favour of the late Lord Grosvenor, and as Gifford soon after formed an intimacy with Mr. Hoppner the artist, the cause of enmity was increased by rivalry in the arts. It may be said of Gifford, as of the Earl of Dorset, that he was

The best good man with the worst-natured muse;

and also, as Pope says of himself, that his life was a "a long disease," for he had a feeble frame, and it was not well formed.

He was induced to write the affecting narrative of his life in consequence of some poetical attacks upon him by Dr. Wolcot, owing to a mistake, as I have stated in another place. He was a very powerful writer, and I have seen some remarks of his, which indeed passed through my hands when I was connected with "The Sun" newspaper, in which they were inserted, and which were characterized by what may be styled tremendous energy. These remarks were sent to me while he was at Ramsgate, and related to a politi-

cal pamphlet written by Mr. Roscoe. Mr. Gifford had no mercy on those who differed with him in political opinions. He was a staunch supporter of Mr. Pitt's administration, and was a firm and intimate friend of Mr. Canning.

I have often thought that, though he might not have equalled Junius in keen sarcasm, he would have been more than a match for him in force of language and cogency of reasoning. He was too apt in his critical comments, like Warburton, to treat others with virulence and contempt, but was a profound judge of literary merit. As he entertained, as all must, a high veneration for the genius of Shakspeare, it is surprising that he did not give an edition of that wonderful bard's works, rather than those of Ben Jonson ; but Jonson was a scholar, and Gifford was strongly prejudiced in his favour on that account. How well he has executed his task as editor of Jonson's Works need not be told. Yet of late years he assured me that he had a great desire of publishing a new edition of Shakspeare, for which he said there was full room, after all the labour and research of the various commentators. But he said that his advanced time of life and ill health forbade the hope that he should ever be able to accomplish his purpose.

Gifford was a kind master, and of a forgiving nature. He had settled a pension on his housekeeper of a guinea a week for her life, in confidence of her fidelity ; but he found that, during a long illness which disabled him from all attention to domestic concerns, instead of paying his tradesmen, &c. for which he had furnished her with the means, she had devoted the money to her own use, had run him in debt to the amount of about 500*l.*, and had besides exhausted his wine cellar, which had been amply stored. Notwithstanding her gross ingratitude and delinquency, he merely dismissed her.

The ability with which Gifford conducted "The Quarterly Review" need not be mentioned, as he rendered it the best work of that nature in Europe, and it still maintains its pre-eminence by the reputation which he conferred on it, and by the abilities of those who have succeeded him in the management. His health evidently declined in his latter years, insomuch that though he always admitted me to see him, and has often written to me, requesting I would call, he was unable to speak more than a few words, desiring that I would talk, and not expect him to answer. In about half an hour after I had been with him, he would generally request that I would go and take tea below, where there were books to amuse me, and then would send down a note to me sometimes, to mention any thing that had occurred to him after I left him.

I have a great many of his letters, which are marked with such kindness and friendship that I am rather surprised I had no memorial in his will, as it is said he left property to the amount of about 27,000*l.* But he disposed of it in a manner honourable to his character ; for, after a few legacies, he left the bulk of it to the son of his early protector, who had rescued him from hopeless indigence and



obscurity, fostered his talents, provided for his education, and enabled him to make a distinguished figure in the literary world.

Gifford had been severe upon the late Mr. Kemble's "foggy throat," in his poem of "The Baviad." I introduced Mr. Kemble to him; and soon after in a new edition of that poem he effaced the passage. Mr. Kemble gave him the free use of his dramatic library, while he was preparing his edition of "Ben Jonson;" and Gifford was profuse in his acknowledgments of Kemble's kindness, and in respect for his talents.

Though Gifford had several appointments under government, and, doubtless, a settlement had been made on him by the late Lord Grosvenor, for being tutor of his son the present earl, yet it is difficult to account for his having left so much property, as for some years his infirmities obliged him to keep a carriage. No doubt he was a severe economist, and very temperate in his habits.

During my long connexion with him, I only dined with him once at his own house, with his friend the late Mr. Porden the architect, a man of great literary as well as professional talents, and who had been the intimate friend of Mason the poet. Mr. Porden declared to me his full conviction, that Mason was the author of the celebrated "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," a work of great poetical merit and humour, but so different from the usual style of Mason as to render it difficult to conceive that it was the progeny of the same mind. Mr. Porden's youngest daughter, a lady of high poetical genius and knowledge, was married to Captain Franklin, the celebrated navigator, who lost in her death an amiable, intelligent, and accomplished companion. I now take leave of my old friend William Gifford.

---

## CHAPTER LXIV.

**DOCTOR BENNET.** With this gentleman, who was Bishop of Cloyne, I had the pleasure of being a little acquainted. He was esteemed a good scholar, and was certainly an amiable and unaffected ecclesiastic. I asked him if there existed any traditional account of his great predecessor, Bishop Berkeley. He assured me, that soon after taking predecession of his diocese, he had made the same inquiry, but all he could learn was, that Dr. Berkeley had left a high reputation for mildness and piety, and that in his clothing, and all other domestic articles, he used nothing but the produce of the neighbourhood in which he resided. Doctor Bennet told me, also, that he was at Cambridge University at the same time with Gray, and that as far as he knew that great poet, he was by no means the affected and fastidious character which he has been represented.

He said, Gray was a reserved man, and not likely to encourage any light and frivolous conversation, and therefore that the character imputed to him was probably the result of vexation in those who had not been suffered to intrude upon his studious seclusion. As Doctor Bennet was an observing and discerning man, I have no hesitation in relying upon his character of the poet.

I may here relate a circumstance which the late Mr. Penneck assured me was a fact. Two gentlemen, strangers to each other, were passengers by themselves in the Windsor stage. One of them was the friend of Mr. Penneck. As they were passing Kensington church, the latter broke forth into an eulogium on "Gray's Elegy," declaring he never passed a churchyard without being affected by a sort of poetical enthusiasm; and he then recited several of the stanzas, and renewed the subject as every churchyard appeared in view. He afterward, addressing himself to his fellow-traveller, remarked how extraordinary it was that a poet who could write with such fervid genius and manly vigour, should be a delicate, timid, effeminate character, indeed, "A puny insect shivering at a breeze." Soon after the conversation became general, and the other gentleman, who had been silently attentive, gave his opinions on such topics as arose, and displayed so much taste, judgment, and learning, as surprised and delighted the other. They both left the coach at Eton, and Mr. Penneck's friend was all anxiety to know who was the accomplished character with whom he had parted. Meeting a friend, he was expressing his admiration, and just then the other gentleman appeared in view, and he was told that it was Gray the poet. He was then all confusion at the character which he had given of the bard to himself.

GEORGE COLMAN the younger. It is no slight gratification to me that I am able to number this gentleman among my living friends. I have had the pleasure of an uninterrupted intercourse with him for upwards of thirty years. I hardly think that I should show an excess of partiality if I were to consider him as one of the very first dramatic writers of modern times, nor would it appear to me to be rash were I to rank him even with my old friend Sheridan. The characters which the latter has introduced are, in a great degree, traditional; some of them may be found in Ben Jonson, in Beaumont and Fletcher, in Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh; but the characters which the junior Colman has represented are drawn from real life, and diversified with great fertility and admirable humour. His "Heir at Law," "Poor Gentleman," and "John Bull" are excellent comedies. The characters are various, well contrasted, and uniformly discriminated and supported. His "Battle of Hexham,"\* and his

\* The "Battle of Hexham" reminds me of a *jeu-d'esprit* of my friend Colman, that well merits a place in his lively "Random Records." Our late friend Dr. Moseley, who succeeded Dr. Monsey as physician of Chelsea Hospital, was making some comments on the play which the author did not approve, and therefore wittily interrupted him in the following manner: "Recollect, doctor, that this is 'The Battle of Hexham,' not a bottle of Huxham."



"Surrender of Calais," are written in the style and spirit of our ancient dramatic writers, whose works contain a sterling weight of matter of much higher value than what is fashioned for the present day. "The Mountaineers," besides an interesting fable, has a variety of characters, and abounds with passages of great poetical energy: and the same may be said of "The Iron Chest," founded on the interesting and impressive novel of my old friend Godwin.

Here I cannot but pause with regret that the unfavourable reception of this play, on its first representation, should have separated two friends, the author and the late Mr. Kemble, from each other, and induce the former to write his hostile preface. I was present at the first representation of this play, and really think that Kemble exerted himself to the utmost of his power to support it. The fact is, that Kemble was ill at the time, yet that very circumstance gave an increased interest to the character, for Sir Edward is supposed to be sunk into sickness and wasting in languor, and happily suited with the dejection and alarm in which the hero of the piece is supposed to be involved.

Not knowing that Kemble was really indisposed, I attributed his acting to his perfect conception of the nature and situation of the character, and thought his support of it was throughout admirable, and that I had never seen him to more advantage. The play, at first, was certainly too long, and Dodd, though an excellent actor, had too long a part, and rendered it tedious by what my old friend, the late Lord Guildford, would style his *twaddling* manner. But the author revised, corrected, and improved his piece, which has now a right to be stationary with the English stage, and affords good scope for theatrical adventurers. Happily the two friends were again reconciled. Kemble made allowance for the *genus irritabile vatum*, and the author properly withdrew and suppressed his vindictive philippic.

I need not mention the humorous poems, farces, &c. &c. which my friend Colman has written, nor his diverting "Random Records," as they must be in the hands of all persons who pretend to taste; but shall conclude with a whimsical compliment that he paid to me in one of his letters, which is now before me.

#### IMPROMPTU.

Nine Tailors (as the proverb goes)  
Make but one man,—though many clothes;  
But thou art not, we know, like those,  
My Taylor!

No—thou canst make, on Candour's plan,  
Two of thyself—(how few that can!)  
The critic and the gentleman,  
My Taylor!

THOMAS HARRIS, Esq. This gentleman, who was long the chief proprietor of Covent Garden theatre, I became acquainted with so

long ago as on the first representation of the opera of "The Duenna." We met at the house of Joshua Mayor, Esq., member for Abingdon, at Millbank. Mrs. Mayor was a very accomplished woman, and had the character of a great wit. She was the daughter of Mr. Dickenson, one of the most eminent brewers of his time. She was understood to be the granddaughter of the famous Mr. Bond Hopkins, immortalized by Pope. It is said that she brought to Mr. Mayor a fortune of about fifty thousand pounds; but as they were a fashionable pair, and lived in a fashionable style, they were much lower in their condition towards the decline of life. Mr. Mayor died first, and Mrs. Mayor retired into the country with a remnant of her fortune. But she was a woman of excellent understanding, and bore the reverse of her fortune with cheerful resignation. Their house at Millbank was the resort of wits, barristers, and politicians, as well as of musicians, and indeed of all who could impart fashion and gayety to the mansion.

The well known Mr. George Rose, the friend of Mr. Pitt, was a frequent visitor; and I have met there Mr. Brummel, private secretary to Lord North, when prime minister, and father of the Mr. Brummel, who has risen into the fantastic distinction of being styled "Emperor of the Beaux." As Mrs. Mayor had a high intellectual character, I may indulge myself in the insertion of a few lines in return for some complimentary trifle which I had addressed to her.

Bard, of all other bards excelling,  
Who so well hast sung of me,  
Bard, in Hatton Garden dwelling,  
Thus I send my thanks to thee.  
Long thy talents I have known,  
Witty, generous, and free;  
But thy judgment ne'er was shown,  
Till thou sang'st in praise of me.

Mr. Potter, a Welsh judge, and Mr. John Churchill, brother of the poet, I have also met at Mr. Mayor's. The latter's powers in conversation were congenial with those of his brother in poetry. I have met him also at the table of Mr. Harris, and always found him the life of the company. Mr. Harris seemed to be the chief and favourite visitor of the house, and his acute and sound understanding and general knowledge rendered him a desirable companion. His views were at once comprehensive and minute, and the same powerful talents which qualified him to govern the complicated concerns of a theatre royal so well, would have fitted him for an elevated situation in the political world. No man was better able to judge of the merits of a dramatic composition, or to comply with the public taste in all its variations.

In consequence of the services which I had been able to render him, I was favoured with his confidence and friendship. He once offered me the privilege of writing admissions to his theatre, which I refused, because I knew that, by accepting it, I should expose him



to the ill will of others. His ill health obliged him to retire from the conduct of the theatre during his latter years, and, living in the country, I had no opportunity of seeing him long before his death. I shall therefore conclude with an extract from one of his letters, as it shows the benevolence of his disposition towards the veteran Dibdin, and will serve as a memorial of our friendship.

“MY GOOD FRIEND,

“I wish with all my heart I could possibly do what you request for my old friend Dibdin—but it is utterly impracticable. Will a permission for his sending in tickets to the amount of fifty pounds, on Monday, the 12th instant, be of service to him? I mean they should be free of all charge or expense whatever. If yes—pray tell Brandon to get them printed for him, specifying the number in pit, box, or gallery. I am sorry that I can do no more for the assistance of a poor fellow who in former times has often assisted me. Thanks for your excellent prologue—but the trifle you solicit is much too confined for your services—you, who are as constantly ready at your post for our service, as if you had no concerns whatever of your own.

“Ever cordially and faithfully yours,

“T. HARRIS.

“Bellmonte, July 4th, 1813.”

---

## CHAPTER LXV.

JOSEPH PLANTA, Esq. If moral principles and the force of good example may be considered as intellectual wealth, I had an opportunity of deriving such mental affluence by my intercourse with this gentleman; for though I had no domestic intimacy with him, I have had the pleasure of meeting him in company with the late Rev. Mr. Harpur, Mr. Maty, and Mr. Penneck, officers of the British museum, at the time when Mr. Planta was under-librarian of that national institution, and afterward principal on the death of Dr. Morton.

I became acquainted with Mr. Planta about the year 1787. I had been previously acquainted with the three other gentlemen; and Mr. Maty, conceiving that I had rendered him some literary service, though of a very trifling kind, brought me an elegant snuff-box from Paris, which I treasure as a relic of old friendship.

I have already had occasion to mention Mr. Harpur in the course of these pages; and all I shall say of him at present is, that he was one of the best-bred men I ever knew, with all the decorum, but without any of the formality, usually attributed to the priesthood.

There was another officer of the museum about that time, a Dr. Grey, who was very fond of music, and had a musical daughter. He

was rather morose in his temper, and formed a perfect contrast to the easy and affable manners of Mr. Planta. All of these gentlemen are dead, but I have not forgotten the pleasure which I enjoyed in their company.

Mr. Planta was a native of Switzerland, and though he was an Englishman in loyal feeling, yet he did not forget his own country, but gratified his patriotic spirit by writing a history of it, which appears to be elegant and impartial. He was also the author of "An Essay on the Runic or Scandinavian Language," and published a catalogue of the manuscripts in the Cottonian library. His last work, I believe, was "A short History of the Restoration of the Helvetic Republic,"—a proof that though he had long been a denizen of Great Britain, a strong sense of his *natale solum* still dwelt upon his heart, while every one of his numerous friends would have been proud to call him their countryman.

Mr. Planta was a fellow of the Royal Society, had the honour of conducting the foreign correspondence of that noble institution, and was afterward appointed its secretary. I was once in hopes that I should be able to join the amicable circle at the British museum, as a vacancy occurred among its officers, and I was favoured with a letter of recommendation from the Duke of Marlborough to Dr. Moore, then Archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop favoured me with an interview, treated me with great courtesy, and asked me why I wished to bury my youth in that comparative seclusion. I told his lordship that quiet, study, and independence would be the chief enjoyment of my life, and that I should be perfectly contented with the situation which I solicited. The archbishop then asked me if I was sufficiently acquainted with natural history, as that was an essential requisite for the office. On my answering in the negative, he told me that the place was not a gift for him to bestow, but a duty for him to discharge, and then courteously put an end to the interview.

The museum having lost by death so many of its former officers, and in later years the Rev. Thomas Maurice and Archdeacon Nares, both men of learning and literary powers, I seldom had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Planta, except accidentally in the street. Fully aware of his parental affection, I always made my first inquiry after his son; his countenance then invariably lightened, and his eyes glistened with pleasure, and hence I could not but infer that so affectionate a father was rewarded by a son likely to fulfil all his paternal wishes.

I was very many years ago acquainted with the Rev. Henry Stephens, who was married to a sister of Mr. Planta, and was promised an introduction to her, understanding that she was a very accomplished lady, but I lost sight of Mr. Stephens, and never enjoyed that pleasure.

Nothing can be recorded of Mr. Planta but what would be highly honourable to his memory, but there is one circumstance I must



mention from respect to his character and to gratify myself. When Alexander, Emperor of Russia, visited the British museum during his short stay in this country, he was accompanied through the rooms by Mr. Planta. The emperor observed that the museum in Paris contained a much superior and more valuable collection. Mr. Planta modestly answered the emperor in the following words: "Your majesty should consider that we have nothing here but what has been honestly bought and paid for,"—an answer respectful, spirited, and just, and which shows how much he felt for the honour of his adopted country. This answer may well be classed with that of Prior the poet, who, when viewing the pictures at Versailles, where the victories of the French monarch are painted by Le Brun, and being asked by a French courtier whether the King of England's palace had such decorations, immediately answered: "The monuments of my master's actions are to be seen everywhere but in his own house:"—an answer loyal and witty, but inferior to that of Mr. Planta in point of moral dignity. Mr. Planta died in December, 1827.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE. It is impossible for me to omit noticing this great artist, whom I had known for nearly forty years, whom, with all the world, I admired for his professional excellence, and whom I sincerely valued as a friend. I knew his father, a very respectable and amiable old gentleman, and his two brothers. One was a clergyman, with whom I was but little acquainted; with the other I was intimate many years. He had tried his fortune on the stage, but not rising into eminence, he entered into the army, and was respected as an officer and esteemed for his private worth. They have both been dead many years.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, as long as I can remember him, was admired for the suavity of his manners, as well as for the precocity of his genius. It cannot be said that he advanced in both, for his improvement in his profession was rapid, but the suavity of his manners became systematic, and settled into refined and habitual courtesy. I have been assured by a friend who knew what he said to be founded in truth, that when Sir Thomas Lawrence was employed in Vienna by order of his late majesty, his manners were so polished and refined, supported also as they were by his general knowledge, taste, and professional genius, that he was admitted into the highest circles at the imperial court, from which all lower grades of nobility were excluded.

Lawrence was a firm friend, and his qualities were well calculated to excite friendship. He lived in the utmost intimacy with the late Mr. George Dance, the architect; the late Mr. John Kemble, the greatest ornament of the stage in his time, except Mrs. Siddons; with the late Mr. Farrington, the admired landscape painter; and with Messrs. Smirke, senior and junior; all of whom were able to appreciate his merits, and the last two are living witnesses of his worth, and sincerely reverence his memory. I have had the pleasure

of meeting all of them at his table, which was characterized by elegance and hospitality. He has often paid me the compliment of desiring me to look at his productions, and to give my opinion of their merits or defects; and I have sometimes been, by his encouragement, emboldened to offer an objection, which he always received with a kind toleration.

It would be presumption in me to express my admiration of his genius, as it is so well known and acknowledged by the world at large; and, perhaps, that world has never witnessed a nobler manifestation of graphic excellence, the product of an individual, than that fine collection of his works which has been exhibited since his death at the British gallery in Pall Mall. As he occasionally condescended to ask my opinion of his works, I often solicited his judgment on my humble verses, and can truly say that I always profited by his critical taste and acumen.

Hearing of his lamented death, I went on the Sunday following the day when that melancholy event took place, and was permitted to take the last view of my departed friend; and I regret to say, he was altered so much that it would have been impossible for me to have known him if I had seen his remains in any other house. I shall now conclude this humble tribute to his memory with a copy of his answer to a letter which I sent to him some time ago, including a poem, if I dare call it so, which I wrote on seeing his portrait of a lady.

“TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Many thanks to you (and they ought to have been returned sooner) for your friendly note and flattering tribute to my fair subject and her painter. Her name was ‘Thayer’ when I painted the picture, and is now ‘Madame Thiebault.’ I think the verses are of your very best, and particularly the last stanza, and the last two lines, but I would cut out the third stanza, because it suggests a doubt adverse to the fidelity of the artist and the beauty of the subject. Let me but have your youth at your age, and I shall be additionally grateful to Providence for its bounties to me.

“Believe me ever, my dear sir,

“Your very faithful servant,

“THOMAS LAWRENCE.

“Russell Square, Wednesday.”

The world at large needs no proof of the genius of Sir Thomas Lawrence, or the extraordinary excellence of his productions, and ought also to know that the generosity of his disposition corresponded with his great professional excellence.

When I was advised by my friends, in consequence of the sudden loss of the property which I had been a great part of my life acquiring, to publish my poems by subscription, I wrote to Sir Thomas Law-



rence, requesting he would honour my list of subscribers with his name, but, as money was a great disorganizer of friendship, desiring that none might pass between us, but that if he would favour me with a print from his portrait of our mutual friend Mr. Kemble, I should esteem that a more valuable subscription. The following is a copy of his answer :

“ TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I should be sorry if on this occasion ‘ money did not pass between us.’ You shall pardon me therefore for disobeying that part of your wish, though I shall gladly request your acceptance of the print you mention the moment I can recover a good impression. I beg the favour of you to send me two copies of your work, my ready subscription to which I am sure I requested might be inserted at Mr. Murray’s when the publication was first proposed.

“ Believe me to remain, with constant esteem and respect, my dear sir, your very faithful servant,

“ THOMAS LAWRENCE.

“ Russell Square, April 10th, 1827.”

It is proper here to mention, that the foregoing letter contained a draft on Coutts’s banking-house for ten guineas, as his subscription, which was the more gratifying, as it contradicted the report that he was embarrassed in his circumstances, owing to his liberal expenditure on the works of great masters.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

MR. JAMES HOOK. This gentleman was long in high reputation for his musical powers ; he was the organist to Vauxhall Gardens for nearly half a century, and his practice as a teacher of music was extensive. His compositions are innumerable ; his songs are marked by science and simplicity, and occasionally by humour, particularly those which he composed for Vauxhall Gardens.

Mr. Hook was a very skilful performer on the organ and piano-forte, and an able teacher in singing ; many distinguished vocal performers were indebted to him for those instructions which raised them to eminence. He was a very sensible and intelligent man, particularly fond of punning, and remarkably fertile in that species of amusement ; he was cheerful and good-humoured.

Mrs. Hook, his first wife, possessed very respectable talents as an artist, particularly in miniature painting, many proofs of which I have seen, and which, in my opinion, displayed great skill and taste.

She had also literary talents, and wrote two or three dramatic pieces, which were well received by the public, and to which her husband's music was adapted; she wrote the words of several of his songs. I have enjoyed many pleasant hours at their hospitable board.

Mrs. Hook died some years before her husband, to the regret of numerous friends, and a considerable time elapsed before Mr. Hook married again. He resided at Calais for some years before he died, and I am among many friends who hold his memory in respect. I knew him during the childhood of his two sons, James and Theodore, both of whom displayed extraordinary abilities at a very early age. Their parents, of course, were proud of such promising offspring, and gave them every advantage of education to bring forth their talents.

James, the eldest, was placed very early in life at Westminster school, where he soon distinguished himself by his classical attainments and literary powers. I remember that, while he was at Westminster school, he paid me the compliment of submitting to my judgment a mock-heroic poem of his own writing, which appeared to me at the time to be a work of humour as well as of poetical spirit. He also at a very early period displayed considerable skill and taste as an artist. I have seen a sketch-book, containing some vivid portraits of many distinguished characters of the time. This book was, I believe, in the hands of his late majesty, by whom Mr. James Hook was much patronized when Prince of Wales, and since his elevation to the throne. Soon after he wrote an opera, entitled "Jack of Newbury," to which his father contributed the music, and which was successfully represented at Drury-lane theatre.

During the period of the French Revolution, and while its detestable principles were vehemently advocated in this country, he wrote a series of letters, that were inserted in "The Sun" evening paper, of which I was then a proprietor. They were characterized by sound learning, cogent argument, literary force, and fervid loyalty. As several demagogues, and some opposition newspapers, mentioned with high praise the liberties enjoyed by our ancestors, he published a series of political papers, under the title of "Good Old Times," in which he demonstrated the superior condition of the people of the present age, and with keen research and historical accuracy, as well as with powerful reasoning, illustrated the tyranny which the people suffered at the very periods that were held forth as proofs of popular freedom by the revolutionary writers and champions of anarchy.

These papers were also taken into "The Sun" newspaper, as they successively appeared, and were afterward collected into a volume of historical truth, sound reasoning, and political sagacity. After his admission into the church, Mr. James Hook successively enjoyed several valuable preferments, and finally became Dean of Worcester, with a probable prospect of attaining a mitre. His powers were various, and he inherited the musical taste of his father. He married a daughter of Sir Walter Farquhar, by whom he had a family;



and died a short time ago, when he might be said not to have passed the prime of life.

Theodore, his younger brother by several years, also distinguished his talents at Westminster school, and those talents expanded with his progress in life. He is the author of several dramatic pieces, which have been represented with great success. I never heard that he was trained for any profession, but by the connexions which his abilities enabled him to acquire, he obtained a lucrative appointment at the Isle of France. Placing too much confidence in a deputy, who abused his trust, he was involved in great pecuniary difficulties on account of the demands of government. As, however, he was the victim of treachery, he experienced the lenity of government, for which it is understood that he made an ample return, in being the chief writer in a weekly paper, published on Sundays, which suddenly arose into great popularity by its wit, humour, spirit, and loyalty.

Mr. Theodore Hook is eminent for his colloquial powers, which render him an acceptable and a courted guest in some of the higher circles of the metropolis. I might perhaps say more of this gentleman, if my opinion of his merits, as he is alive, were not likely to be ascribed to partiality and the natural impulse of old friendship with his family.

As a proof of the favour in which the late Dean of Worcester was held by his present majesty, he received a [valuable] snuff-box from the royal hand, enriched by a beautiful portrait, in enamel, of Colbert, the celebrated French minister of a former age.

W. T. FITZGERALD, Esq. This gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted many years, was a member of a club entitled "Keep the Line," the import of which was to maintain due decorum and respect in society. Never was there a stronger opposition than the implied precept in the designation of the club, and the liberties which the members took with each other in the way of railery; though, as all passed with good-humour and conviviality, no offence was ever taken during the time I was a member; but as the meetings were held on Sundays, for the accommodation of Mr. Lewis, Mr. Holman, and other theatrical gentlemen, and cards were introduced, the club gradually declined, and I sent in my resignation, retaining, however, a sincere friendship with its members in general. The club soon after broke up.

At this club I first became acquainted with Mr. Fitzgerald, and our intercourse ripened into a sincere and warm friendship, which only terminated with his lamented death.

Mr. Fitzgerald was related to the family of the Duke of Leinster. He was nephew to the Mr. Martin who wounded Wilkes in a duel, and was afterward the hero of one of Churchill's poems, entitled "The Duellist," not without danger to the poet, for Mr. Martin was a very determined character, and as likely to call out Churchill as Wilkes.

Soon after I became acquainted with Mr. Fitzgerald he introduced me to his family, consisting of his sister and the two Misses

Martin, his cousins. It was understood that there was a good income among them, which they formed into a common stock, and lived together, by which means they were able to keep a good house in Upper Seymour-street, and to receive their friends with liberal hospitality.

As Mr. Fitzgerald was a great lover of the drama, he had frequently dramatic scenes represented at his house in the evening to parties of his friends, some of whom used to take part in the scenic amusements. The late Lady De Crespigny used to attend these parties, and assist in the representations. I remember to have been present when they represented a scene in "The Fair Penitent," in which Mr. Fitzgerald supported the part of Horatio, and Lady De Crespigny that of Calista. There was a sententious dignity in Fitzgerald's Horatio; and the lady gave great effect to her part, particularly where Calista snatches her letter from Horatio, and destroys "the wicked lying evidence of shame."

Another of these amateur performers was my friend William Boscawen, Esq., a poet and a scholar, and whose translation of Horace is justly admired for correctness and spirit. He presented the work to me, and when I expressed my regret that he had given "The Art of Poetry" in verses of eight syllables, he agreed with me that it ought to have been translated in the heroic measure; and the last time I saw him, which was accidentally in the Strand, he told me that he had made a great progress in a new translation of that poem, in ten syllable verse, as more suited to a didactic subject. He looked, however, so ill, that I could not help foreboding in my mind that he would not live to finish his version. It happened to be the day on which the directors and subscribers to "The Literary Fund" held their anniversary dinner; and when I met him, he was so zealous in the cause of that noble institution, that I am sure severe illness only would have kept him from the celebration. His amiable lady was also one of the voluntary actresses at Mr. Fitzgerald's, and supported pathetic characters with great feeling and delicacy.

Mr. Fitzgerald, besides his patrimonial inheritance, had a retired pension as one of the officers of the victualling office. Before he left the office he was the next claimant, by seniority, to the head of the department in which he was engaged; but he waived his right in favour of an inferior, upon a promise of a hundred a-year. The other succeeded; but, proving a defaulter to a large amount, he absconded to America, and was followed by officers sent by our government, and frightened into restitution, though, if he had firmly held his ill-attained property, it is said that he would have been supported by the American laws.

Having mentioned that admirable institution, "The Literary Fund," it is proper that I should speak of its founder, the REV. DAVID WILLIAMS. I was well acquainted with him before that institution was established. He was a learned man, and a powerful writer. His first public appearance in London was as a preacher, at an obscure chapel in Solio, where he brought forward a new form of prayer,



and advanced doctrines different from those of the orthodox church, but did not become popular, chiefly, perhaps, because he did not imitate the zeal and enthusiasm of the Whitefields and the Wesleys. He therefore relinquished that pursuit, and devoted himself to literature.

He had early in life written a work entitled "The Philosopher," in which there appeared to be shrewd and profound reasoning. He engaged in a translation of the works of Voltaire, and on the appearance of the French Revolution, became partial to its principles. Soon after the commencement of that disturbance in the civilized world, he published a work entitled "Lessons to a Young Prince;" but immediately after it appeared the infamous Thomas Paine came forth with his more daring "Rights of Man," and the "Lessons" had comparatively few pupils.

One of his early publications was a "Letter to David Garrick," in which he treated the British Roscius with great severity. His hostility was imputed to two causes; one the rejection by the manager of a dramatic piece on a Welsh subject, and the other his friendship for Mossop the actor, whom he accused Garrick of having excluded from his stage from motives of jealousy, because his own powers had declined, and he had then "a lacklustre eye." This pamphlet had a great sale, but was condemned for its illiberal spleen.

It is probable that from his connexion with the booksellers, he published many works during his latter years, but, as I was not in the habit of visiting him, I had no opportunity of knowing what they were. As it is not known that he had suffered the severe vicissitudes of a literary life himself, he is the more entitled to the praise of benevolence for having been the founder of "The Literary Fund," which may be considered as one of the most meritorious institutions in this country, and in all Europe.

The delicacy, as well as humanity, with which it is conducted, not only in affording relief to the unfortunate votaries of the muses, but in sparing their feelings by the laudable caution with which pecuniary assistance is administered, is above all praise. Nor is this delicate reserve the only merit of the directors; for they do not wait for applications, but endeavour to discover the victims of misfortune, and wherever they find suitable objects, promptly tender a liberal aid. The followers of literature and the friends of genius must therefore hold in lasting veneration the name of David Williams.

He was a tall, stout, healthy man during the time that I knew him; but I understand that within the last two years of his life he was so much reduced by sickness as to be wholly unable to leave his home, and disposed to admit only the visits of his most intimate friends. He was talkative in company, but if opposed in argument, there was a kind of negligent indifference, and assumed superiority in his manner, as if he thought his opponent's objections not entitled to serious confutation. Judging from what he said to me when I last met him, he seemed to have become a latitudinarian in religious matters; for observing him in a very light gray coat, I could not help expressing my surprise.

"Why," said he, "I wore the garb of hypocrisy so long that I was ashamed of it, and have now cast it aside." He was, however, a warm and steady friend, and indefatigable in the cause of humanity.

Mr. Fitzgerald was a strenuous and persevering supporter of "The Literary Fund," to which he annually contributed a laudatory ode, to the number of eighteen, which he recited himself on the anniversary celebrations as long as his health would permit, and the vigorous animation of his manner gave powerful support to the poetical energy of his several compositions.

Mr. Fitzgerald fell under the sportive lash of the authors of "The Rejected Addresses," chiefly on account of the fervid loyalty which marked his poetry in general; but that poetry is really characterized by so much strength, correctness, and feeling, that it will stand its ground; and I am persuaded that if my ingenious and liberal-minded friends, the authors of those sportive effusions, had known him, the manly character and honourable spirit of Mr. Fitzgerald would have exempted him from their humorous hostility. As to the other critical assailants of Mr. Fitzgerald, except Lord Byron, they are unworthy of notice.

Before I take leave of Mr. Fitzgerald, I will return to Mr. Boscawen. He was the nephew of Admiral Boscawen, one of our former naval heroes; but though the glorious victory of the Nile seems to lessen the triumph of all preceding naval achievements, Mr. Boscawen came forward with an ode in honour of Nelson, expressive of enthusiastic admiration. Mr. Boscawen published a volume of "Original Poems," highly creditable to his genius and taste. He also published a separate poem entitled "The Progress of Satire," occasioned by a passage which alluded to him in "The Pursuits of Literature." It is somewhat curious that the author of this popular poem has never been discovered.

For my part, I consider "The Pursuits of Literature" as one of the very best of modern poems. It is founded upon the true principles of poetry, politics, and morals, though the late commentator Steevens invidiously said, that "the lines were only pegs to hang the notes upon." To prove the folly of the observation, a small edition of the poem was published without notes, and was powerfully impressive. What modern poet has produced a passage equal to that of "The Bard," in "The Pursuits of Literature?"

Mr. Mathias presented to me his tract on the subject of the "Rowley Poems," and his arguments on the question of their authenticity appear to me to be decisive. Mr. Mathias is admitted to be a profound scholar, and I have been assured that he writes the Italian language with as much precision and taste as if he were a native of that part of Italy where it is spoken with the greatest purity and elegance. He has long resided at Naples, but wherever he resides he must be considered as the perfect gentleman.

Mr. Fitzgerald was for many years upon the most intimate footing with the late amiable Lord Dudley and Ward, a nobleman of the good old school. He was distinguished for the benevolence of his disposi-



tion and the urbanity of his manners. His political principles being congenial with those of Mr. Fitzgerald, the noble lord was highly gratified with that gentleman's poetical recitations. His lordship, I understand, died intestate, from a conviction that his hereditary successor would dispose of his property according to the parental intentions; but the present Lord Dudley has probably exceeded those intentions.

Mr. Fitzgerald had long been afflicted with an asthma, and latterly with a dropsy, which finally destroyed his constitution. He has left an affectionate widow and six children to lament the loss of a kind husband and father, a loyal subject, a polished gentleman, and an excellent member of society.

---

## CHAPTER LXVII.

JOHN CROWDER, Esq. This gentleman, who conducted himself so well during his mayoralty, I had the pleasure of knowing many years, and have passed many pleasant hours at his hospitable mansion, near the three-mile stone on the Hammersmith road. He frequently invited his friends to his plenteous and elegant table. His guests were chiefly literary characters, or friends connected with literature. I have met there the late Sir Nathaniel Conant, formerly a bookseller; the Baldwins, eminent booksellers and printers; Mr. Alexander Chalmers; Mr. George Nicol, and his son Mr. William Nicol. Good-humour and festivity was "the order of the day."

Mr. Crowder was a printer, and a proprietor of "The Public Ledger," a daily paper, that under his conduct faithfully adhered to its original motto, viz. "Open to all parties, but influenced by none." He was a firm friend to the British constitution, equally free from all servile devotion to the ministry, and adverse to all the violence of party. He was also, I believe, connected with a paper manufactory; and possessed, by all accounts, property amply sufficient to justify his liberal hospitality.

In the earlier part of his life, he was attached to the stage, and was occasionally an amateur actor of such merit as might have tempted him to adopt the theatrical profession if he had not had better prospects. Dr. Stratford, a clergyman, had written a tragedy entitled "Lord Russell," and I was present at the performance of this tragedy in Drury-lane theatre by amateur actors, and Mr. Crowder was one of them. Mr. Lawrence, the father of the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, was another. A son of Dr. Lucas, a celebrated Irish patriot and writer, was also a supporter of this piece for the benefit of the author; and all I remember is, that there was something so grotesque and ludicrous in the performance of Mr. Lucas, that it was in the daily papers the subject of ridicule for many days after.

I do not recollect that any former lord-mayor, within my time, so rapidly passed through the several offices of sheriff, alderman, and chief magistrate of the city, as Mr. Crowder,—a proof of the excellence of his character, and the general estimation in which it was held.

I had not seen him since he invited me to his sheriff's dinner till I lately met him at my old and worthy friend's, Sir William Beechey, with whom I was sitting in his painting-room; Mr. Crowder, then lord-mayor, when he entered the room and saw me, seemed to recollect old times, and gave a start of theatrical surprise, and before we parted, he invited Sir William, myself, and my son to one of his private dinners at the Mansion-house. Illness prevented my attending the first invitation, but we soon received another, which my son and I accepted; but then, unfortunately, his illness prevented his presiding at the table, and that illness, to the regret of his numerous friends, has since terminated in his death.

It is some consolation to those friends, that Sir William Beechey has painted a fine portrait of him in his civic robes, and as it will doubtless come into the hands of the engraver, they will all have an opportunity of obtaining a faithful and spirited likeness of an estimable man and an able and upright magistrate.

**DR. WILLIAM THOMPSON.** This gentleman was a native of Scotland, and a very learned man; he is mentioned by my friend Mr. Moore, in his *Life of Sheridan*. He was very intelligent, but very absent; I was intimate with him for nearly thirty years. He was the particular friend of Gilbert Stewart, the Scotch Historian, with whom also I had the pleasure of being acquainted.

I met Dr. Thompson one day in Soho; and as he was communicative and instructive, I always listened to him with pleasure. He began to speak on the politics of the day and of the universal dissipation of the age, concluding every remark, "But, sir, it all arises from the progress of manners." The discourse lasted so long, that I had no time to spare, therefore taking advantage of a momentary pause, I asked him how Mrs. Thompson (his first wife) was. "Oh, sir!" said he, "I am one of the most unfortunate men in the world; she died last night, and I am now going to the undertaker to arrange her funeral." Having a great respect for the doctor, I could not avoid feeling some satisfaction, that his political dissertation on the progress of manners had for some time released him from the pressure of conjugal anxiety.

**WILLIAM PEARCE, ESQ.** It is with pleasure that I can include this gentleman among my living friends, as well as my old ones. He long held a responsible situation at the Admiralty, and has for some years retired to the enjoyment of ease, literature, and domestic happiness. He married the sister of my old friend Sir Henry Bate Dudley.

Mr. Pearce is well known in the dramatic world. His farces were always successful, particularly his "*Hartford Bridge*," which was



skilfully adapted to the talents of the respective performers, and was so attractive at the time when it first appeared, that it well might be revived and ranked among the stock pieces. Mr. Pearce's first production was a poetical description of the reigning beauties of the time. The characters were nicely discriminated, and the praise was appropriate without flattery. This work was called "The Bevy of Beauties," and was so much admired that it procured for the author the title of "Bevy Pearce." Many of those beauties have doubtless obeyed the summons of "the fell sergeant Death;" but the work should be revived, that as Vandyke has bequeathed to us the "Beauties of the reign of Charles the Second," by his admirable pencil, those of the reign of George the Third may be transmitted to posterity by the poetical delineations of my friend Pearce.

Mr. Pearce has written many popular songs, which have been adapted to music by his excellent friend Shield, a man whom all who knew him admired and loved. I will mention one of these popular songs, because, though written by Mr. Pearce, and the music by Shield, it has been erroneously attributed to the elder Dibdin, with whose lyric compositions it indeed may well be compared. This song was styled "Tom Moody."

"You all knew Tom Moody, the whipper-in, well."

This song is properly assigned to Mr. Pearce, in Daniel's valuable edition of "British Sports," and in other publications, so that there can be no excuse for depriving the author and the composer of their due praise.

**DOCTOR HILL**, chiefly distinguished by his "Swedish knighthood," which he translated into English, and generally styled Sir John Hill, was well acquainted with my father, but I never saw him, though I was very desirous of being introduced to him, as his works had highly gratified me in early life. He was a man of very extraordinary powers, and might have risen into the most respectable estimation if he had not been the victim of vanity and malevolence. Though a very timid man, and disposed to submit to the grossest personal violence, and even chastisement, nothing could subdue the heroic intrepidity of his pen. His history is so well known, that it would be absurd to detail it in this place.

He was severely handled by Churchill, but his indiscriminate censure of others justly exposed him to assaults. He attacked Christopher Smart, the poet, who was provoked to write a mock heroic poem on him, entitled "The Hilliad," to which Mr. Arthur Murphy assured me that he wrote the copious notes annexed. Smart styled Hill in this poem,

The insolvent tenant of encumber'd space.

Smart only published one book of this poem, and promised another, but his mind became disordered, which rendered him incapable.

It is a singular circumstance, that though so pusillanimous in his own temper, Hill has drawn a portrait of such firm, temperate, and determined courage in his novel, called "The Adventures of Mr. Lovell," as it might be conceived hardly possible to enter into the mind of so opposite a character. He quarrelled with Woodward, the actor, and wrote severely against him. Woodward was provoked to reply in a pamphlet, in which there was a passage to the following effect, as well as I remember. "I once," says Woodward, "saw you play Lothario at May Fair, when Dagger Marr (a poor actor) was Altamont, and the audience heartily concurred with you, when you dying said, 'Oh! Altamont, thy genius is the stronger.'"

The late Mr. Jerningham told me that Hill appeared to him to be a good Latin and Greek scholar, but that he was totally unacquainted with the modern languages of Europe; yet he invited all the *corps diplomatique* to dine with him at Bayswater, and requested Mr. Jerningham to be of the party, that he might be instrumental in promoting some intercourse between the host and his guests, which without such aid must have been very limited.

One time, when King George the Third was at the theatre, and an incidental compliment was paid from the stage on his majesty's patronage of literature, Sir John Hill, who was in a neighbouring box, arose in a manner that attracted the attention of the audience, and made a formal bow to his majesty, merely to render himself conspicuous.

Dennis M'Kerchier, Esq., an Irish gentleman of fortune, who lived with Lady Vane, was said to have written her memoirs, as they appear in "Peregrine Pickle;" and Dr. Hill was employed by Lord Vane to write the history of "Lady Frail," to counteract the impression on the public. The infidelity of the lady had induced M'Kerchier to separate from her. When he was near death, she anxiously desired to see him, but he would not suffer her to approach. Mr. M'Kerchier is introduced in "Peregrine Pickle" as the gentleman who so generously protected the young man in the famous Anglesey cause, who was so cruelly persecuted by Lord Valentia, his uncle. This story is the foundation of Mr. Godwin's last romance, entitled "Cloudesley."

Dr. Hill, in his novel of Mr. Lovell, according to report, intended to draw his own character as the hero of the piece, and he there mentions an amour that Lovell had with the famous Mrs. Woffington.

Mrs. Woffington was so regardless of her reputation that little respect is due to her memory; but it is impossible to excuse the vain relation of Dr. Hill, even admitting that it was well founded.

Dr. Hill possessed poetical talents that might have raised him into notice. There are some specimens in the novel alluded to, but I subjoin the following stanzas, which are little known, and still less to have been written by him.



## ANACREONTIC.

Bid me, when forty winters more  
 Have furrow'd deep my pallid brow;  
 When from my head, a scanty store,  
 Lankly the wither'd tresses flow;  
 When the warm tide that, bold and strong,  
 Now routs impetuous on and free,  
 Languid and slow, scarce steals along,  
 Then bid me court sobriety.

Nature, who form'd the varied scene  
 Of storm and calm, of frost and fire,  
 Unerring guide, could only mean  
 That Age should reason, Youth desire;  
 Shall then that rebel Man presume,  
 Inverting Nature's laws, to seize  
 The dues of Age in Youth's high bloom,  
 And join impossibilities?

Let me waste the frolic May  
 In wanton joy and wild excess,  
 In revel, sport, and laughter gay,  
 In mirth and rosy cheerfulness.  
 Woman, the soul of all delights,  
 And wine, the spur of love, be there,  
 All charms me that to joy incites,  
 And every she that's kind is fair.

There is a redundancy of imagery in the first part of the last stanza, but the whole is spirited and pointed.

The doctor was a pitiable victim to the gout. Having once met my friend Penneck, who was hobbling under the same disorder, the doctor said, "Try the tincture of Barduna, it is a certain cure." A fortnight after, coming in his carriage to the British museum, and hardly able to get out of it, being so severely attacked by the gout, and meeting Mr. Penneck at the same place, the latter, with sarcastic gravity, said, "Doctor, let me recommend the tincture of Barduna to you as a sure specific."

It is impossible to reflect on the character of Sir John Hill, to whom nature had been so bountiful, without feeling regret that his talents, attainments, enterprising spirit, and indefatigable industry should have been nullified by his envy, vanity, and morbid thirst for fame, or rather for notoriety. Properly directed, his literary powers and his fertility might have raised him to one of the highest ranks of literary eminence. But as it was, he rendered himself

— A fix'd figure

[ For the hand of scorn to point her slow and moving finger at.

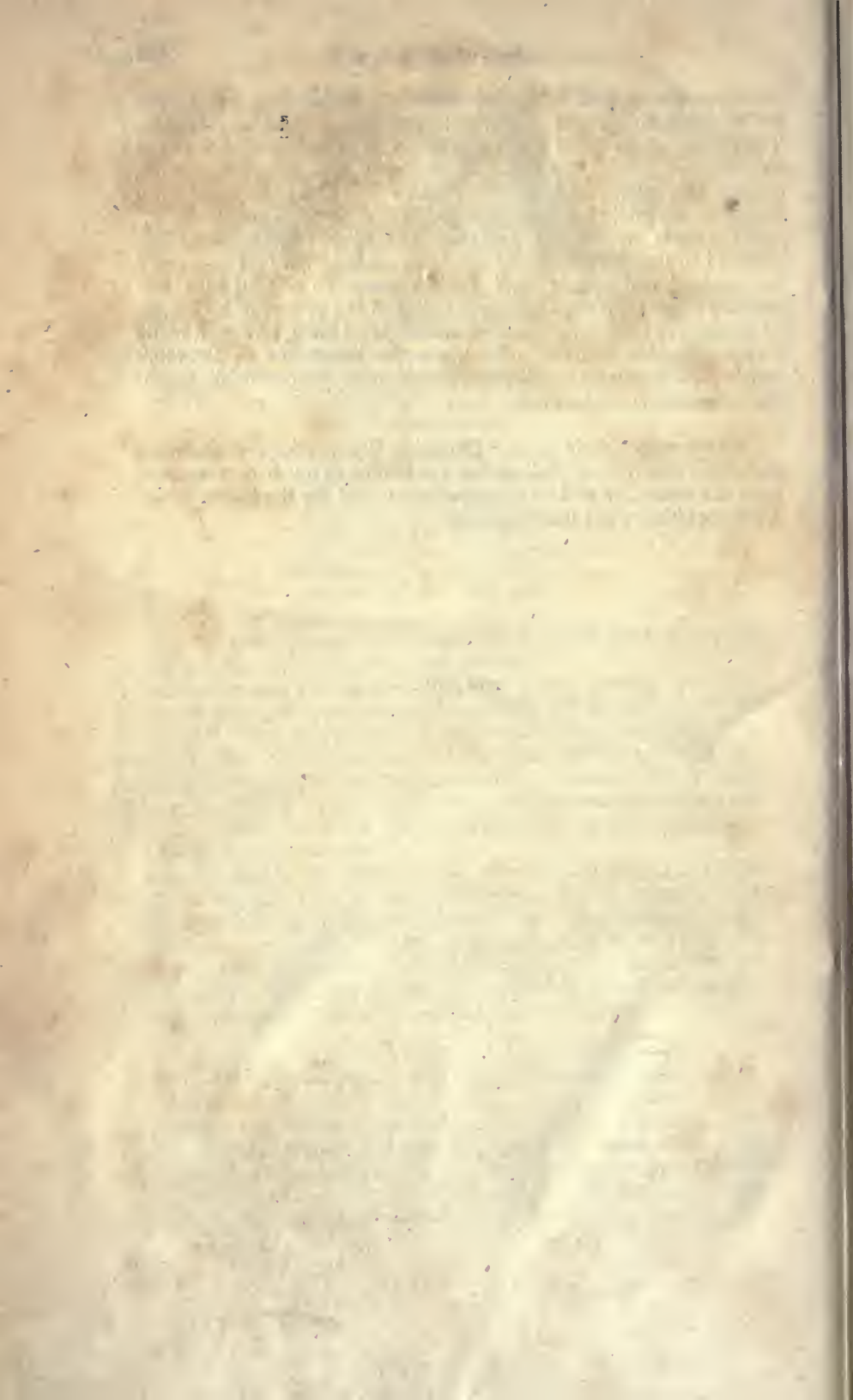
I once met his widow at the house of Mr. Pope, the actor, in Half-moon-street, and Dr. Wolcot was of the party, to whom she was formally introduced as to Peter Pindar. She seemed to be an intelligent and lady-like character. She paid Dr. Wolcot many compliments on his works, and recited many passages from them. The

doctor, who was fond of praise, seemed to be highly gratified with her commendation, and amply returned her courteous attention. The doctor and I went away together, and as we walked, I asked him how he liked Lady Hill. He said she was a very agreeable, elegant, and intelligent woman. I then asked him if he knew who she was. He said, "I suppose the widow of some Irish lord." "No," said I, "she is the widow of that celebrated physician, Sir John Hill." "What! of that old quack—have I been praising her? D—n me, I will go back and spit at her." This menace he uttered in a momentary anger; for soon after, reflecting on her praises of his works, he returned to his first feelings, and added, "But she is, however, really a very agreeable woman." Such was the impression of Dr. Hill's memory on a man who otherwise would have honoured his talents and admired his productions.

I shall now conclude these "Rambling Recollections" with simply observing, that if they shall amuse the reader as much as they have done the writer, he will be abundantly satisfied for the labour which it has cost him to put them together.

THE END.





**NARRATIVE OF DISCOVERY AND ADVENTURE IN AFRICA.** From the earliest Ages to the present Time. With Illustrations of its Geology, Mineralogy, and Zoology. By Professor JAMESON, JAMES WILSON, Esq. F.R.S.E., and HUGH MURRAY, Esq. F.R.S.E. 18mo.

**DISCOVERY AND ADVENTURE IN THE POLAR SEAS AND REGIONS.** With Illustrations of their Climate, Geology, and Natural History; and an Account of the Whale Fishery. By Professor LESLIE, Professor JAMESON, and HUGH MURRAY. [With a Map of the Polar Seas and Regions, and several Woodcuts.] 18mo.

**LIVES OF EMINENT PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS.** By ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, Esq. In 3 vols. 18mo. [With Portraits.]

**THE LIFE AND ACTIONS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.** By Rev. J. WILLIAMS, A.M. *Vicar of Lampeter.* [With a Map of the Campaigns of Alexander the Great.] 18mo.

**THE COOK'S ORACLE, AND HOUSEKEEPER'S MANUAL.** Containing Receipts for Cookery and Directions for Carving. Also the Art of composing the most simple and most highly finished Broths, Gravies, Soups, Sauces, Store Sauces, and Flavouring Essences; Pastry, Preserves, Puddings, Pickles, &c., with a complete System of Cookery for Catholic Families. The Quantity of each Article is accurately stated by Weight and Measure; being the Result of actual Experiments instituted in the Kitchen of WILLIAM KITCHINER, M.D. Adapted to the American Public by a Medical Gentleman. From the last London Edition. 12mo.

**DIRECTIONS FOR INVIGORATING AND PROLONGING LIFE; OR, THE INVALID'S ORACLE.** Containing Peptic Precepts, pointing out agreeable and effectual Methods to prevent and relieve Indigestion, and to regulate and strengthen the Action of the Stomach and Bowels. By WILLIAM KITCHINER, M.D. From the Sixth London Edition. Revised and Improved by THOMAS S. BARRETT, M.D. 18mo.

**MODERN AMERICAN COOKERY:** Containing Directions for making Soups, Roasting, Boiling, Baking, Dressing Vegetables, Poultry, Fish, Made Dishes, Pies, Gravies, Pickles, Puddings, Pastry, Sick Cookery, &c. with a list of Family Medical Recipes, and a valuable Miscellany. By Miss P. SMITH. 18mo.

**LEXICON MEDICUM; or, MEDICAL DICTIONARY:** containing an Explanation of the Terms in Anatomy, Botany, Chemistry, Materia Medica, Midwifery, Mineralogy, Pharmacy, Physiology, Practice of Physic, Surgery, and the various Branches of Natural Philosophy connected with Medicine. Selected, arranged, and compiled from the best Authors. By ROBERT HOOPER, M.D. F.L.S. The fourth American, from the last London Edition; with Additions, from American Authors, on Botany, Chemistry, Materia Medica, Mineralogy, &c. By SAMUEL AKERLY, M.D. In 2 vols. 8vo. [With an Appendix.]

**A DICTIONARY OF PRACTICAL SURGERY:** comprehending all the most interesting Improvements, from the earliest Times down to the present Period; an Account of the Instruments and Remedies employed in Surgery; the Etymology and Signification of the Principal Terms; and numerous References to Ancient and Modern Works: forming a *Catalogue Raisonné* of Surgical Literature. By SAMUEL COOPER. From the sixth London Edition. Revised, corrected, and enlarged. With numerous Notes and Additions, embracing all the principal Improvements and greater Operations introduced and performed by American Surgeons. By DAVID MEREDITH REESE, M.D. In 2 vols. 8vo.



**LIVES OF CELEBRATED TRAVELLERS.** By J. A. ST. JOHN. In 3 vols. 18mo.

**SKETCHES OF VENETIAN HISTORY.** In 2 vols. 18mo.

**THE HISTORY OF POLAND,** from the earliest Period to the present Time. By JAMES FLETCHER, Esq. With a Portrait of Kosciusko. 18mo.

**FESTIVALS, GAMES, AND AMUSEMENTS,** Ancient and Modern. By HORATIO SMITH, Esq. 18mo. [With Engravings.]

**THE HISTORY OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.** By J. G. LOCKHART, Esq. [With Portraits.] In 2 vols. 18mo.

**LIVES AND VOYAGES OF DRAKE, CAVENDISH, AND DAMPIER:** including an Introductory View of the earlier Discoveries in the South Sea; and the History of the Bucaniers. [With three Portraits.] 18mo.

**THE LIFE OF LORD NELSON.** By R. SOUTHEY, Esq. [With a Portrait.] 18mo.

**JOURNALS AND LETTERS OF LORD BYRON.** By THOMAS MOORE, Esq. In 2 vols. 8vo. [With a Portrait.]

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF HIS LATE MAJESTY GEORGE THE FOURTH.** With Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons of the last Fifty Years. By the Rev. GEORGE CROLY. [With a Portrait.] 18mo.

**LIFE OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.** By HENRY GLASSFORD BELL. In 2 vols. 18mo. [With a Portrait.]

**LIFE OF LORD BYRON.** By JOHN GALT, Esq. 18mo.

**MEMOIRS OF THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.** By J. S. MEMES, LL.D. 18mo. [With Portraits.]

**THE COURT AND CAMP OF BONAPARTE.** 18mo. [With a Portrait of Talleyrand.]

**ANNALS OF TRYON COUNTY; OR, THE BORDER WARFARE OF NEW-YORK,** during the Revolution. By WILLIAM W. CAMPBELL, Esq. 8vo.

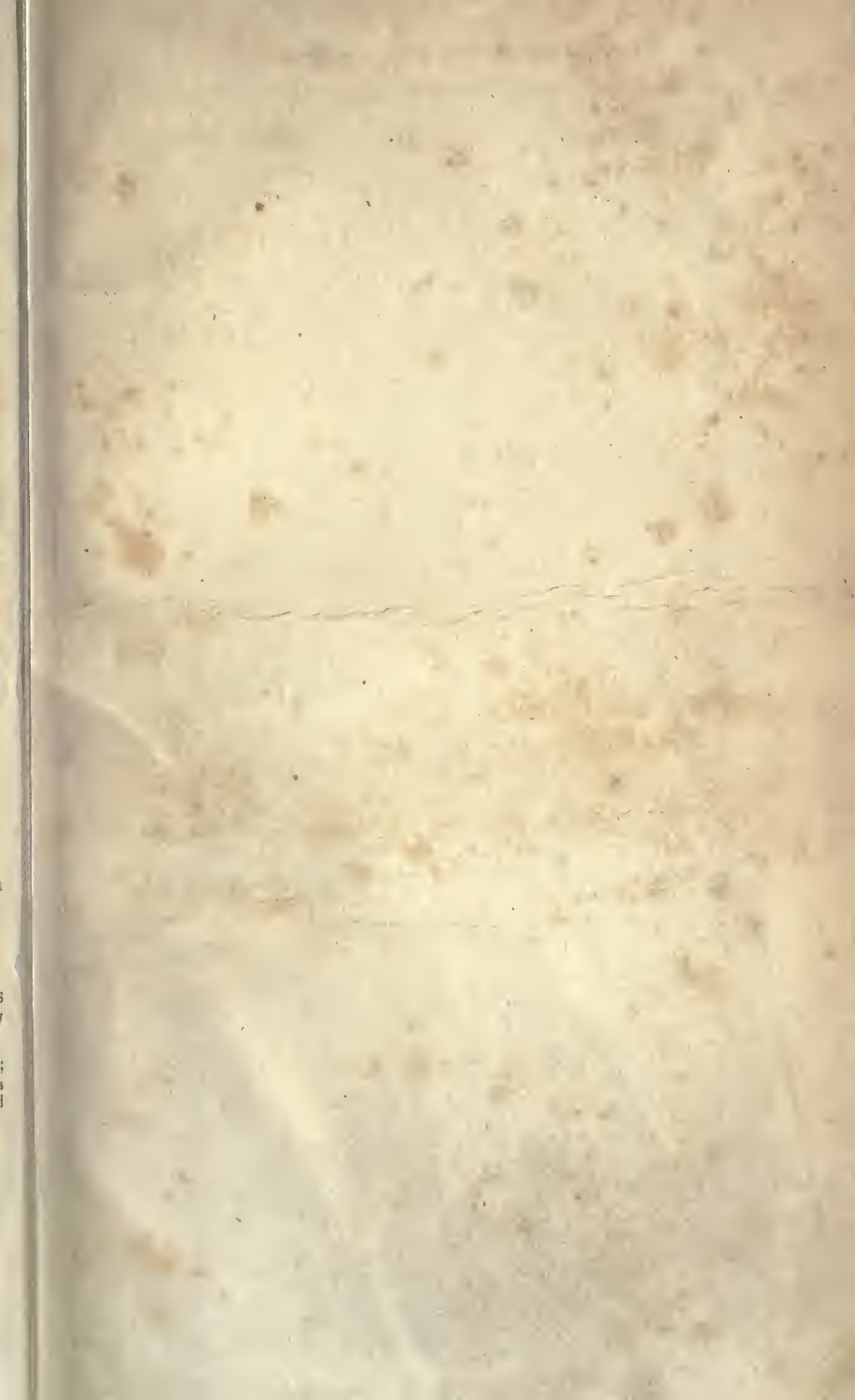
**THE PLAYS OF PHILIP MASSINGER;** adapted for Family Reading, and the Use of Young Persons, by the Omission of Objectionable Passages. In 3 vols. 18mo. [With a Portrait.]

**THE PLAYS OF JOHN FORD;** adapted as above. In 2 vols. 18mo.

**A TREATISE ON SHADOWS, AND LINEAR PERSPECTIVE.** By CHARLES DAVIES, Professor of Mathematics in the Military Academy at West Point. Royal 8vo. [Illustrated with Copperplates.]

**ELEMENTS OF SURVEYING.** With the necessary Tables and Plates. By CHARLES DAVIES, Professor of Mathematics in the Military Academy at West Point. 8vo.

**THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SURVEYING;** containing all the Instructions requisite for the skilful practice of this Art, with a new set of accurate Mathematical Tables. By ROBERT GIBSON. Illustrated by Copperplates. Newly improved and enlarged. By JAMES RYAN. 8vo.

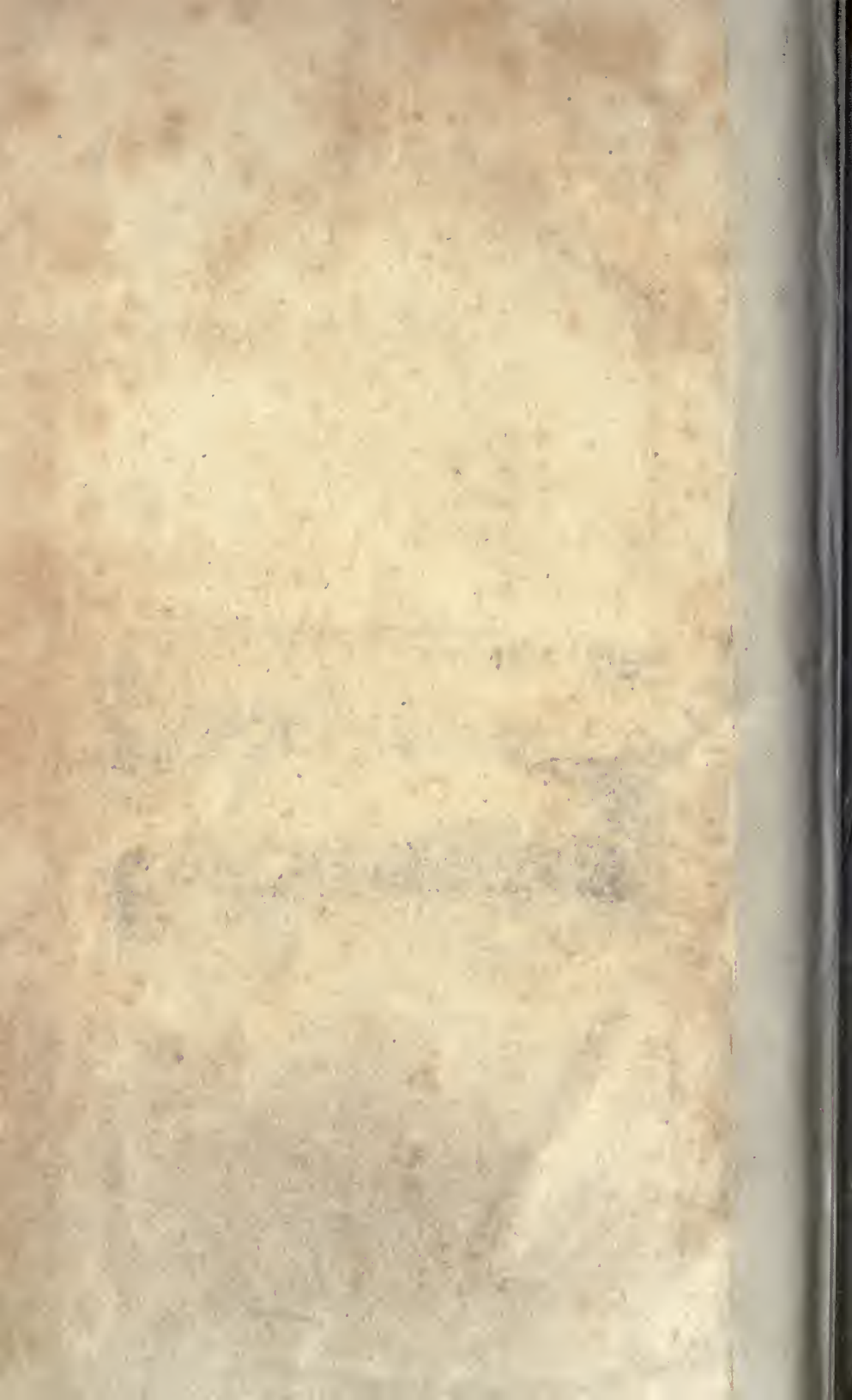












PR  
5549  
T3Z52  
1833

Taylor, John  
Records of my life

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---



